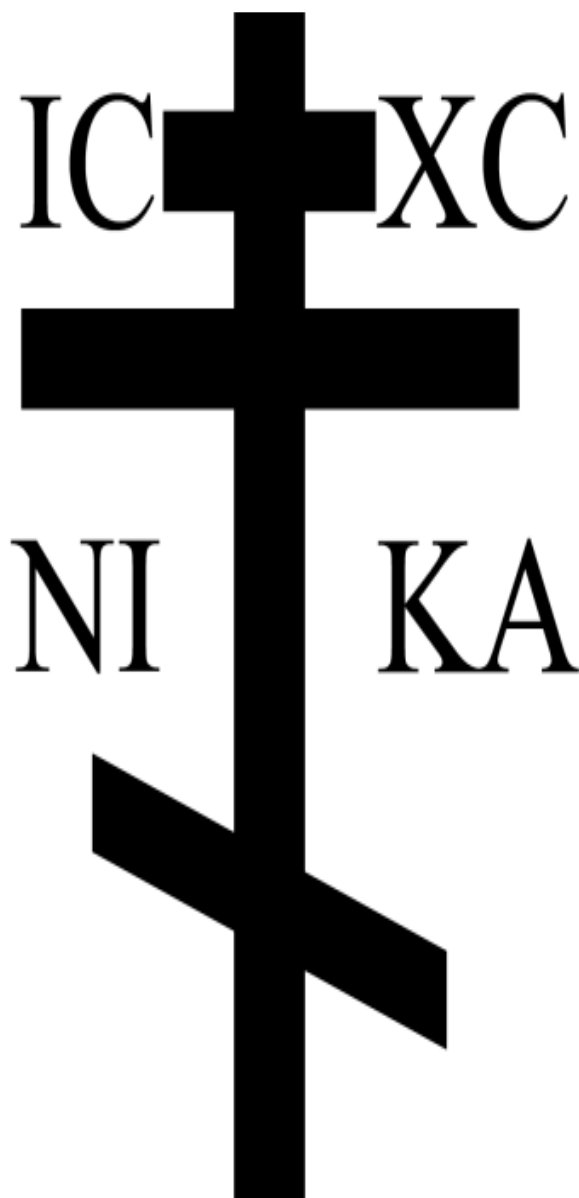


The Romanian Philokalia Volume VII / Saint Dumitru the Restorer of the Christian Theology

Priest Professor PhD Academician
DUMITRU STĂNILDAE



THE ROMANIAN PHILOKALIA

- VOLUME VII -

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HILOKALIA

**OR COLLECTION FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE HOLY FATHERS WHICH
SHOWS HOW THE MAN CAN BE
CLEANED, ENLIGHTENED AND
BECOME PERFECT**

VOLUME VII

TRANSLATION¹, INTRODUCTION AND
FOOTNOTES BY

**DUMITRU
STĂNILOAE**

¹ The texts of *The Romanian Philokalia* were translated from the Greek language in the Romanian language and put together by Priest Professor PhD Academician Dumitru Stăniloae.

Translated from the Romanian language in the English language, by the will of God, by the most worthless from men: E.I.t.

Writings by:

**Nicephorus from
Loneliness, Theoleptos of
Philadelphia, Saint
Gregory the Sinaite,
Saint Gregory Palamas**

**Bucharest
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1977**

**Very Useful Word
About prayer,
Watchfulness, and
Guarding the Heart,
of Nicephorus from
Loneliness**

Nicephorus from Loneliness

Short Biographical Note

Relatedly to the time Nicephorus from Loneliness lived, we knew nothing sure until we found and published a text from the Word II from the Triad II of Saint Gregory Palamas against Barlaam, namely: “For those Who Appease Themselves with Holiness” (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἱερώς ησυχάζοντων τῶν υστέρων ὁ δεῦτερος). By appearing this Nicephorus, and he was attacked by Barlaam because of the “Method” of the Prayer to Jesus that he wrote, Saint Gregory Palamas says: “But he directed his vehemence of his speeches, more than against anybody, shamelessly, against the things written about prayer, by the Pious and Confessor Nicephorus, who gave a beautiful confession, and that’s why he was condemned by the first Emperor Paleologos, who admitted the arguments of the Latins; Nicephorus, who was an Italian, he attached himself to our Orthodox faith and he left his country as well as he left his parental tradition, and he reckoned our faith as more precious than his faith, for the word of the truth that is at us. And by coming to this, he chose the cleanest life, namely the lonely life. And as dwelling place he chose that one with a holy name and above the world, Athos, that is the house of the virtue. And here he showed himself, first, as knowing how to accept to be guided, by obeying the most important ones amongst the fathers. By giving those, for a long time, the proof of his humbleness, he learnt from them the art of the arts, namely the experience of the appeasement (hesychia) and he becomes a guide them who exercise themselves in the world of the cogitation for the fight against the ghosts of the evilness. To them, he even composes a collection of advices belonging to the fathers, and that prepares them for asceticism, it classifies the kinds of the struggles, it shows the rewards and the crowns of the victory. Then, in addition to those, because he saw that many of the beginners weren’t able even to partially master the

fickleness of their mind, he composed them a *procedure which they to be able to restrain a little, through it, the scattering and the movement of their mind's imagination*.

This philosopher, Barlaam, he directed, so, towards Nicephorus, his much smartness, as a fire that touches a matter standing in its way, not being him shamed by that blessed confession and by the exile for it, and not being him ashamed of them who lived together with him and who were taught by him the godlike teaching, and who showed themselves, later on, as the salt of the earth and as light to the world, and enlighteners of the Church". And Palamas mentioned amongst those, in the first place, Theoleptos of Philadelphia. These ones, at their turn, they were teachers to some men "who practice even nowadays that king of living", namely at the time Palamas lived, and they were calumniated by Barlaam because of that².

From this text we find out, therefore, that Nicephorus was an Italian and Catholic, and that he embraced the Orthodoxy, and he settled down in Athos way before 1274, when Emperor Paleologos VIII accepted the union with Rome, and, a little time after (1276) he was exiled from Athos together with other monks, because of their opposition to emperor's decision³. In that place – seemingly one of the desert islands from Aegean Sea⁴ – because on those islands were exiled them who opposed the union with Rome, amongst those who lived in the same community with Nicephorus was Theoleptos too, and he learnt from Nicephorus the method of the ceaseless prayer, that Nicephorus learnt it on Athos.

Even before being sent in exile and before being there the teacher of some disciples whom he taught the method of the prayer to Jesus, Nicephorus had on Athos a "seminary" (φροντιστήριον) and he gathered around himself a number of disciples, though Nicodemus the Hagiorite, in his biographical

² We published this text according to Cod. Coisl. 100, f. 157 r.-v. in the work *The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas*, Sibiu, 1938, pp. 54-57, and before that, in the "Annual Book of the Theological Academy" of Sibiu, 1930, pp. 8-10. Now, after publishing the work of Palamas, under the supervision of P. Hristou: *Γρηγορίου του Παλαμα, τὰ εὐγγράμματα*, this text can be read in this work, in the volume I, Thessaloniki, 1962, pp. 508-509.

³ Saint Gregory Palamas, *Word II Triad I*, at P. Hristou, vol. I, p. 405: "Living for many years in wilderness and in quietude, he then withdrew himself in the most deserted places of the Holy Mountain".

⁴ G. Pachymere, *De Michaele Paleologo*, lib. V G.P. 143, Col. 874.

note from the Greek Philokalia affirms that Nicephorus occupied himself with the method of appeasing himself in loneliness. But we have seen that Palamas says that he was the guide of several disciples, whom he left his “method”⁵. Probably, Nicephorus alternated the loneliness with the care for guiding others. Anyway, in the old Romanian manuscripts he is called Nicephorus from Loneliness, perhaps following the affirmation of Nicodemus the Hagiorite. It seems that he would have composed, while on Athos, also a *Word about the Proceeding of the Holy Ghost, against the Latins*, or even several writings against them⁶.

If Theoleptos died around the years 1324-1325, and Nicephorus was his disciple around the years 1276-1278, the last one of them could have been born around the years 1215-1220 and he could have died around the years 1290-1300.

The method for praying composed by Nicephorus it was called by Nicodemus the Hagiorite, in *The Greek Philokalia*, as: *Word on Watchfulness and on Guarding the Heart* (Λόγος περι νήψεως και φύλαξη της καρδιάς). The method as such, it is preceded by a string of fragments from the lives of several fathers who lives previously, and by short excerpts of their lives, as Saint Gregory Palamas says. But at the end of each fragment, Nicephorus placed a short commentary that wants to show the respective father as a man who practiced the guarding and the gathering of the mind inside, for thus, him to provide his “method” with a ground.

The work is written in a simple language in order to be useful to as many monks as possible. This for was another motif for which, Barlaam, proud of his scholastic speculation, he had disdainful words for Nicephorus. Saint Gregory Palamas, defending the writing of Nicephorus against the reproaches of Barlaam, he said that Barlaam wasn’t ashamed about so great disciples had by Nicephorus, “but the fact that the work was composed by that one in a simple and non-crafted manner, it moved him to contradict and he was able take his arguments out of that... But this meaning wasn’t able to topple over these simple words, except by misinterpret them”.

⁵ See also Cod. Lavr. 1626, ff. 149-153, at P. Hristou, *quoted work*, p. 329.

⁶ J. Meyendorff, *Introduction a l’étude de Grégoire Palamas*, Paris, 1959, p. 31, and P. Hristou, *quoted work*, p. 329, note no. 56. P. Hristou presupposes that a part of the *Word about the Proceeding of the Holy Ghost* it is preserved in Cod. Moscv. Syn. 208, under the title: *Υποθετικοί συλλογισμοί περι εχπορενσεως του Αγίου Πνεύματος*.

In *The Second Word amongst the First Words* (published by us in the quoted study) and in *The Second Word amongst the Last Words, for Them Who Appease Themselves, or about Prayer*, belonging to Palamas, that we are going to present it in this volume, he defended, in detail, the “Method” of Nicephorus.

This method was, at its turn, translated in Romanian, and it was extensively copied in our monasteries, under the title “Word for Guarding the heart, very useful”, of Nicephorus from Loneliness⁷.

⁷ To be seen, for instance: the Manuscript no. 16 (miscellaneous), Century XVIII, from the library of Neamț Monastery, f. 81 r.-83 v.; manuscript no. 29, Century XVIII, f. 3 r.-7 v.; manuscript no. 39, Century XVIII f, 60 v. – 61 v. (incomplete text); manuscript no. 51 from the year 1801, f. 83 r. – 87 v. (Nicephorus the Monk, *Cuvânt de mult folos pentru păzirea inimii* (*Very Useful Word for Guarding the Heart*). According to Fr. D. Fecioru, *Manuscrisele Sfintei Mănăstiri Neamțu* (*The Manuscripts of the Holy Monastery of Neamțu*), in manuscript, pp. 40, 69, 105, 155. It can be also found in the manuscript no. 22 (miscellaneous) from the library of the Romanian Patriarchy, dating from the beginning of the XIX Century, f. 39-43, bearing the same incomplete title. See at Fr. D. Fecioru, *Catalogul Manuscriselor românești din Biblioteca Patriarhiei Române* (*The Catalogue of the Romanian Manuscripts from the Library of the Romanian patriarchy*), in *Studii teologice* (*Theological Studies*), XII, 1960, no. 5-6, p. 453.

Word about Prayer

Of Nicephorus from Loneliness

You who are mastered by the longing for being partakers to the extolled, godlike, and luminous showing of our Savior Jesus Christ; you who want to receive in the feeling of your heart the fire from above heavens; you who strive yourselves to reach experiencing and feeling the reconcilment with God; you who left all the things of the world, in order you to find and to earn that treasure hidden in your heart's field; you who want to ignite, while still being here, the candle of your souls and you have rejected all the things from here; you who want to know, by experiencing it and by trying it, and by receiving the Kingdom of Heavens that is inside you – you come and I'll show you the science of peacefully and heavenly living, or better said, the method that leads its worker, without tiredness and without much sweating, to the realm of the dispassion. It is a method that doesn't let itself to be scared by any deceit of threatening form the devils, but it gets scared only when one lives outside that living that I am going to present it to you, because of disobedience. So it happened, yore, to Adam, who, by not observing the commandments of God, but by making friends with the snake and by reckoning that the snake is worthy to be believed, and thus by feeding himself with the fruit of the deceit, he threw himself, pitifully, in the precipice of the death, of the darkness, and of the corruption, and he drew with himself all the people from after him.

Therefore, turn yourself, or, more rightly speaking, let's turn ourselves, brothers, towards ourselves, by totally rejecting the advice of the snake and the searching for the things that draw us downwards. This is because we won't be able to reach the reconcilment and the familiarization with God, until we do not enter within ourselves, as much as it is possible to us. What

is wonderful it is that, by detaching ourselves from the wondering within world, and from the snake, we attach ourselves, tightly, to the Kingdom of Heavens that is inside us. That's why the monastic living was called the art of the arts and the science of the sciences, for it doesn't cause us anything like these corruptible things which we are sinking in, and it moves our mind from these things to the highest things, and it promises us foreign and mysterious goods "which the eye hasn't seen and the ear hasn't heard and at the man's heart they haven't ascended" (1 Cor. 2: 9). That's why, "our fight isn't against the blood and against the body, but it is against the dominions, the masteries, and the chieftains of the darkness of this century" (Eph. 6: 12).

If, therefore, this century is darkness, let's run away from it. Let's run away with our thought, in order there not being anything common between us and satan, who is the enemy of God. This is because, he who wants to make friendship with him, he will become enemy of God, and him who has become enemy of God, who will help him? That's why, let's follow the example of our fathers and let's search for that treasure from inside our hearts, as they did. And by finding this treasure, let's keep it with strength, by working it and by guarding it in the same time. This is for we have been appointed to that since the beginning. And if some other Nicodemus showed himself bewildered by that, by saying in opposing ghost: "How can somebody, by entering his heart, to work or to remain himself there?", as that Nicodemus says to our Savior: "How can somebody enter the womb of his mother for the second time and to be born, while being old? (Jn. 3: 4), he will hear at his turn that "The Ghost blows wherever he wants" (Jn. 3: 8). If we doubt, with faithlessness, about the deeds of the working life, how will come to us those of the sight? This is for the doing is a step towards contemplation (towards the souly sight).

But, because without written proofs he who doubts it, he could not be convinced about it, let's list in this Word the lives of the saints and what they wrote, in order to be useful to many, and so, by being persuaded by that, him to be defended against all doubt. So, by starting the Word from our great father, let's add collections from the words and from the deeds of the following fathers, as much as it is possible to us, in order to prove it.

From the Life of Our Pious Father Anthony

Once, two brothers went to Abba Anthony and, because they didn't have water for travel, one of them died, and the another was about to die. So, because of no longer being able to walk, the second brother laid himself on the ground, waiting to die. Meanwhile, Anthony, sitting in the mountain, he shouted out at two monks who happened to be there and said them: "Hurry up, take a pitcher with water and run of the road towards Egypt; because, of the two men who were coming here, one died and another is about to die, if you do not hurry up. This has been shown to me while I was praying". So, the two monks went and found one dead, and they buried him, and they reinvigorated the another with water and they brought him to the old man, who was at one day's distance.

If somebody asks, what he didn't speak before that man died, he won't do the right thing. This is because of not belonging to Anthony the decision regarding that monk's death, but that belonged to God. God decided regarding that man and also God unveiled the state of the other man. Of Anthony was only this wonder that, while sitting into mountain, he had his heart taking vigil, and that the Lord showed that man to Anthony, from far away. Can you see that due to the watchfulness of the Anthony's heart, he became seer of God and foreseer? This is for, actually, God shows Himself to our mind without our heart, in the beginning cleaning up him whom God loves, as John Climacus says, as a fire, and filling him in up with shininess as with a light and giving his mind a godlike form⁸.

⁸ God shows Himself to our mind or to our power of spiritually noticing His presence, only when our mind is gathered within our heart, namely in the ultimate intimacy of the human being, that is, in the same time, an emotional character, a capacity, and a loving impulse. This showing of God is a supreme light, it is the evidence of the supreme reality, that is, too, the support of our own existence. The mind takes then, the borderless form of God and the mind receives the light of its own evidence, like that one of the of God's evidence. This light of evidence, it extends itself all over. That's why Saint Anthony could see through it, from far away, what was happening to those two travelers. In order to be given that, the mind must be cleaned up of sins, namely of everything that closes it towards God and towards God's universal creation, into a limited thought, that the mind has passionately attached to.

In the conclusion he draws out of this happening from the life of Saint Anthony, as also in the conclusions to the lives and to the advices of the other holy fathers, Nicephorus aims to accentuate the importance of concentrating the mind in the deep of the being or of the heart of

But let's pass to the next holy fathers.

*From the Life of Saint Theodosius, the Cenobiarch
(The Exarch of the Coenobitic Communities)*

The godlike Theodosius was so wounded by the sweet arrow of the love, and he was so much held by its ties, so that he was accomplishing with the deeds the high and godlike commandment: "You shall love your God with the whole your heart and with the whole your soul and with the whole your thought" (Lk. 10: 27). And he couldn't have been able to do that, otherwise than by having all the natural powers of his souls tending towards anything from here but only towards desiring the Maker. Through these understanding works of the soul, even when he was comforting, he was fearful to many, as, even when he was rebuking, he was love and sweet in all things. Who else brought so much benefit to the many, by speaking to them? And who else was so skillful in gathering his senses and in making his sense to search inside? He was making them who were in the middle of the noise, to be them in a quietude bigger than that from desert, and he was, in the same time, both in multitude and in quietude. Behold that this holy father too, bearing the name Theodosius, he reached to be wounded by the love for the Builder, for he was gathering his sense and herd his senses inside⁹.

the believer, in the same time with the stopping of the activity of the senses that was directed towards the things from outside. In the interior vision that the mind gains it thus, even the things from outside are unveiled to the mind, external things which are beneficial to him who lives in ascesis, or to other people.

⁹ Saint Theodosius the Great, whom we celebrate on January the Eleventh, after he satisfied his apprenticeship in the great monastery from next to David's Tower from Jerusalem, he founded, in the year 465, his great coenobitic community at east of Bethlehem, between Bethlehem and Mar Saba Monastery. Still from his time, the coenobitic community he founded reached 400 monks. Patriarch Salustius of Jerusalem (486-494) appointed him as ruler of the coenobitic communities from the Patriarchate (cenobiarch = a king of exarch), while the same Patriarch appointed Saint Sava as some kind of exarch of the hermits (H. G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur in Byz. Reich*, 1959, p. 137, 203, 204). His life was written by Cyril of Scythopolis and by Bishop Theodore of Petra. To be seen the authors who occupied themselves with those lives, at H. G. Beck, *quote work*, p. 406 and 409. Nicephorus presents here rather a characterization of Saint Theodosius's way of living, highlighting the fact that it consisted of a gathering of the senses towards the inside realities. By that, even when the saint is amongst multitude, he felt like in loneliness and this quietude he was communicating it to others too.

From the Life of Saint Arsenius

The wonderful Arsenius was guarding this: not to debate questions in writing, and all the less to spread them around. And not because he didn't have power. How could we say that about one who was speaking so well that he was speaking clearly to other too? But the habituation to silence and the displeasure to showing himself were causes of the said things. That's why, also in church es and at religious services, he strived very much, in order him not to see somebody and not to be seen by others, and so he stood behind some pillar or behind some other object, to hide himself, keeping himself unseen and on the side from mixing with others. That was for he wanted to take heed to himself and to gather his mind inside and so to ascend, easily, towards God. And, actually, this godlike man, this angel on earth, he gathered his mind inside, so that thus to elevate himself easily to God¹⁰.

From the Life of Saint Paul from Latro

The godlike Paul was living on mountains and in deserts, living together with the wild beasts as with some neighbors and friends. And sometimes, by descending to the Lavra, he deigned to visit the brothers and he urged them not to weaken in their souls, neither they to get lazy from the tiring deeds of the virtue; but, with the whole taking heed, they to hold onto that living according to the Gospel and they to fight, with the whole courage, against the ghosts of the evilness. In addition to that, he taught them also a rule which they could be able through, to dishabituate themselves from the passionate habits and to remove, from themselves, the offshoots of the passions. And what was the rule this godlike father was teaching his nescience disciples, in order they to be able to remove, through it, the baits of the passions? It wasn't other but the guarding of the

¹⁰ From the *Life of Saint Arsenius*, Nicephorus highlights this perseverance for paying attention to himself and to gather his mind inside himself, in order him to be able to elevate his mind to God.

mind. This is for only that rule can help to achieve such a feat, and no other rule can¹¹.

From the Life of Saint Sava

When the godlike Sava saw someone who rejected all things, that he learnt in detail the canon of the monastic living and that he can guard his mind and that he can fight the enemy thoughts after he removes from his cogitation all the memories of the worldly things, Saint Sava gave him a monastic cell in the Lavra, if that one was helpless and sick in his body. And if that one was amongst the healthy and vigorous, Saint Sava allowed him to build to himself a monastic cell.

Can you see that the godlike Sava required his disciples to guard their mind and only after that he allowed them to sit in monastic cells? What are we going to do, because we are sitting, lazy, in our monastic cells and we do not even know that there is a guarding of the mind?¹²

¹¹ Latros was called in the Middle Age the mountain that was later called as Latmos, near Miletus. Around this mountain and on it, there were founded several monasteries which enjoyed a great fame. Even since the early time of the Byzantium, there were monastic cells. Later on, there settled other monks, who ran away from Raithu Monastery from Sinai, escaping the Saracens, and from Crete. These new beginning date from around the VIII Century. The most important amongst the 13 monasteries, it was, in addition to Kellibarian, the Saint Paul Monastery, named after its founder, Paul the Young, who first lives as hermit on the top of the mountain. They who gathered around him later form a coenobitic community. This Paul dies in the year 955 (at H. G. Beck, *quoted work*, p. 211-212). But we do not know if Nicephorus speaks about this Paul or about another. Anyway, also from the example of Saint Paul from Latro, he highlights the same perseverance for guarding his mind from the scattering towards the external things.

¹² Saint Sava was born in the year 439 in Mutasca from Cappadocia. He settled down as hermit in Palestine, where he founded 7 monasteries. The most famous amongst the monasteries he founded it is the Great Lavra Mar Saba from today, at east from Bethlehem, near to the Dead Sea, in a sand desert; then, equally known was the New Lavra that became famous in the dispute around Origenism. Saint Sava himself was a fierce fighter against Monophysitism and Origenism. He died on 5th of December in the year 532. On the 5th of December he is celebrated by the Church too. He left a typicon whose basis came from Egypt, and Saint Sava made it whole. That typicon entered the general use of the Orthodox Church (H. G. Beck, *quoted work*, pp. 397-398). The live of Saint Sava was written, in detail, by his admirer: Cyril of Scythopolis, who wrote the lives of other saints too (for instance the life of Saint Euthimios the Great). (H. G. Beck, *quoted work*, p. 409, and S. Vaill  , *Les Ecrivains de Saint Sabas*, Echos d'Orient, 1898-1899). Nicephorus the Monk underscores here too, the importance had by the guarding of the mind in the life of Saint Sava and how Saint Sava required that to his disciples too.

From the Life of Saint Agathon

A brother asks Abba Agathon: "Tell me something: What is greater, the bodily asceticism of the guarding of the mind? And Abba Agathon answered him: "The man is like a tree. So, the bodily asceticism are the leaves, and the guarding of the things from inside are the fruits. Therefore, for, according to the Scripture, "every tree that doesn't bring forth good fruits it is hewn down and it is thrown into the fire" (Mt. 7: 19), it will be obvious that the whole of our zeal aims to the fruit, namely to guarding the mind. But there is necessary also the cover and the adornment of the leaves, that are the bodily asceticism".

Let's wonder how this Saint spoke against all them who do not have the guarding of the mind, and he told them who praise themselves only with the doing: "every tree that doesn't bring forth fruits", namely that doesn't have the guarding of the mind, but it has got only leaves, namely only deeds, "it will be hewn down and thrown into the fire". Fearsome is your saying, father!¹³

From Abba Mark (towards Nicholas)

"If you want, therefore, my son, to achieve inside yourself the torch of the understanding light and of the spiritual knowledge, in order you to be able to walk unimpeded in the deepest night of this century and your steps to be directed towards our Lord, for you thoroughly wanted the way of the Gospel, according to the prophesizing word, namely you to follow, with a fiery faith, the consummate evangelical commandments, and to become partaker, through desire and through prayer, to the Lord's sufferings – I am going to present you a wonderful method and a rule of the spiritual way of life. This method doesn't need tiredness and bodily asceticism, but it needs soul's asceticism, watching over the mind and attentive thought, working with fear of and with love for God. Through this method, you will be able to easily set the enemy's multitude in running...

¹³ From *Paterikon*, Cozia Printing Press, 1930, p. 27. It is accentuated the same need for guarding the mind.

If you want, therefore, to overcome your passions, by gathering yourself into yourself through prayer and through together-working with God, and by descending yourself into the deeps of your heart, you will search for the trace of the three strong giants, namely the forgetfulness, the idleness, and the nescience, which the spiritual enemies of another nation lean on; under these ones, by sneaking in, the other passions of the evilness are reinvigorated and receive power within the souls of the people who love the pleasures. And through much attention and watching over the mind, together with the help from above, by finding out the realities which are unknown to others, you will be able, with much zealous taking heed, to deliver yourself from the three cunning giants... This is for the accompanying of the true knowledge with the memory of the words of God and with the good zeal, when it is forced to persist into you soul by the working grace and when it is carefully guarded, it will erase from your soul any trace of forgetfulness, of nescience, and of idleness..."¹⁴. Can you see what the spiritual words speak coherently like? Can you see what they limpidly reckon like, that the knowledge comes to us out of taking heed? But let's see also what the following fathers tell us too.

From Saint John Climacus

"Hesychast is him who strives to border his incorporeal part into the bodily part, and that is the most wonderful thing. Hesychast is him who says: "I am sleeping, but my heart is watching" (Son of Songs 5: 2). Close the door of the body's monastic cell, the door of the tongue's uttering and the gate from inside the ghost. By sitting on a high place, take heed at yourself, and if you know, you will see: how, when, from where, how many, and who are the thieves coming in and stealing your grapes. When getting tired, the guard raises up and prays and, sitting down again, he manly keeps doing the same work. Something else is the guarding of the thoughts and something else is the watching over the mind. As far is the sunrise from sunset, as far it is the second one from the first one, by being much more tiring. Like the thieves see imperial weapons set in a

¹⁴ From Mark the Ascetic, *Epistle towards Nicholas*, The Romanian Philokalia, volume I, pp. 325, 326, 327. Here are presented urges to guarding the mind.

certain place, they do not easily come close to that place, likewise him who has united his heart with the prayer, he won't be easily robbed by the thieves of the thought world"¹⁵.

Can you see the mentioned fruits of the wonderful works of this great holy father? But we pass by them like some people travelling through darkness and we step over the useful-to-the-soul words of the Holy Ghost, as in a night skirmish, like some people who deafened themselves willingly.

Let's see further on, the things written by the Holy Father for advising us to watchfulness.

From Abba Isaiah

"When somebody detaches himself from the things from the left side, he will know in detail all his sins he committed in front of God. This is because the man won't see his sins, if he doesn't detach himself from them, with bitter separation. They who reached this measure, they have found the crying and the prayer and, by remembering their evil accompanying with the passions, they feel ashamed in front of God. Let's live in asceticism, therefore, brothers, according to our power, and together with us there will be God working too, according to the multitude of His mercies. Even if we haven't guarded our heart as our fathers did, let's strive, according to our power, at least to guard our bodies without sin, as God requests us, for, after the time of the famine that engulfed us, God will have mercy on us too, as on His saints"¹⁶. This great father here comforts also the weak ones, by saying: "Even though we haven't guarded our heart as our fathers did, if we guard our bodies without sin, as God requires, God will have mercy on us too".

Great is the compassion and the condescendence of this father.

From Makarios the Great

"The main thing of him who lives in asceticism, it is that by entering his own heart, he to wage war to satan and, by fighting

¹⁵ *The Ladder*, Word no. 27. The same advice.

¹⁶ Isaiah the Hermit, head no. 17, from *About Guarding the Mind in 27 Heads*, *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 397.

the plots, to defeat satan. And if somebody visibly guards his body from corruption and from fornication, but he fornicates within himself, before God, and if he fornicates in his dialogue with his thoughts, he won't benefit anything by having his body virginal. This is because it is written: "Everyone who will look at a woman in order to lust her, he will have already fornicated in his heart" (Mt. 5: 28). This is because there is a fornication done through body and there is a fornication that mates with satan".

Seemingly, this father resists the words of Abba Isaiah we mentioned before. But it isn't so. For that one too, he commands us to guard our bodies, as God requests it. But he doesn't ask only for the cleanness of the bodies, but also for the cleanness of the ghosts, and so he puts to our heart the same evangelical commands.

From Diadochus

"He who always live within his heart, he is stranger to all the beauties of the life. This is for, by walking into ghost, he won't be able to know the body's lusts. One like this, by taking his walks into the city of the virtues, he has the virtues as guards of the city. That's why, the devils' plots against him remain unsuccessful"¹⁷.

The saint was right saying that the plots of the enemies remain unsuccessful, when we live in the deep of our heart, and all the more, as we tarry longer in there. But I am aware of not having enough time to list, in the present story, the words of all our holy fathers, as I want to. That's why, after I will have mentioned one or two more, I will try to finish it.

From Isaac the Syrian

"Strive yourself to enter your inner chamber and you will see the heavenly chamber. For that one and this one, are one, and you will enter a sole entrance in order to see both of them. The Ladder of that Kingdom is hidden inside you, namely into

¹⁷ Diadochus of Photice, *Ascetic Word*, head no. 57, *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 356. Nicephorus draws the same conclusion about the need for living with the mind in the heart's deep.

your soul. So, you sink into yourself, in order you to get out of sin, and you will find steps there, which you will be able to climb on”.

From the Carpathian

“One needs much struggle and toil in prayers, in order him to find the undisturbed state of the thought, as another sky of his heart, where Christ lives, as the Apostle says: “Don’t you know that Christ lives within you? Except you are reprobate”¹⁸.

From Simeon the New Theologian

“The devil, together with the devils, they received the permission that, after they made the man to be cast off Paradise and from God, through disobedience, to wobble on the thought plan, the man’s cogitation day and night; of one, much, or another, a little, and of another, even more. And the man’s cogitation isn’t possible to be strengthened except by ceaselessly remembering God. When the godlike remembering has been imprinted in somebody’s heart, through the power of the cross, it strengthens his cogitation, and it makes it unshaken. To that leads the fight into cogitation, on each Christian who has prepared himself to fight it, in the stadium of the faith in Christ. If the Christian doesn’t reach there, he will fight vainly. For this fight it is the whole diverse ascesis of his who bears the heavy suffering for God. Through it, he aims to attract the mercifulness of the good God, in order God to give him, again, the first honor, and to seal in his cogitation, Christ, as the Apostle says: “My children, whom I born again, until Christ will take image within you” (Gal. 4: 19)¹⁹.

¹⁸ 2 Cor. 13: 5. *Head of Comforting*, head no. 52, *The Romanian Philokalia*, IV, p. 140, 141. It is given this text in order to show that, through prayer, the understanding unveils a sky of the heart, where Christ lives in.

¹⁹ It is given this text too, in order to show that, by continuously practicing the prayer, it is imprinted into heart the continuous remembering of God, and it is fixed in it that thinking at God, in the same time with the power of God. Out of all these texts, Nicephorus drew the following conclusions: a) The guarding of the mind, in order the mind not to wander through thoughts which are foreign to God. b) The gathering of the mind within heart, that can be reckoned as the own deep of the human being, and of the mind. c) The maintaining of the mind within heart, it can be achieved by continuously preserving the memory of God, or

Have you seen, my brothers, that there is a spiritual craftsmanship, or a method, that leads, quickly, its worker, to dispassion and to seeing God? Have you been convinced, that all the deeds are counted at God as the leaves on a tree, without fruits? And that every soul that doesn't have the watchfulness of its mind, he will do those deeds vainly? Therefore, let's strive lest, by dying without fruits, to repent uselessly.

Question: We do not doubt, at our turn, and we even are strongly convinced that out of this writing we know which was the deed of them who were well-pleasant to God and that there is a certain work that quickly delivers the soul of passions, and that it connects the soul to the love of God, a work that is necessary to everyone who fight under Christ's leadership; but what the taking of heed is, and what one is found worthy like, to achieve it? Behold what we would like to learn about, because we are totally ignorant of such a thing.

Answer: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ Who said: "Without Me, you can do nothing" (Jn. 15: 5), by summoning Him as helper and together-worker, I am going to try and show you what the taking of heed is and what one can achieve it like, by the will of God.

The taking of heed, some of the Holy Fathers said, it is the watching upon your mind; other called it as the guarding of your mind; other, again, called it as watchfulness; others, the called it as the mental peace, while other called it in other ways. But all these names show one and the same thing. You thing at these too, as you would think at what one calls by the name "bread", another says "piece" while other says "mouthful". But what the taking of heed is, and you are going to find out in details. The taking of heed is the sign of the perfect repentance; the taking of heed is the healing of the soul, the hatred against the world, the turning back to God; the taking of heed is the abolishment of the sin and the regain of the virtue; the taking of heed is the doubtless trust in the forgiveness of the sins; the taking of heed is the beginning of the sight (of the contemplation), better said it is the foundation of the contemplation, for through it, by leaning Himself downwards,

through the ceaseless, and clean of other thoughts, prayer. d) Through this remembrance, the mind encounter God Himself within heart, as into another sky.

After he founded the necessity of these things, on the basis of the example and of the urges of some previous to him saints, Nicephorus wanted to provide a method that those things can be accomplished through.

God shows Himself to our mind; the taking of heed is the non-disturbance of our mind, or better said, it is the stopping of our mind, given to our soul, as a gift, by the mercy of God; the taking of heed is the removal of the thoughts, it is the palace of the memory of God, it is the treasury of patiently enduring the troubles coming upon us; the taking of heed is the cause for faith, for hope, and for love. This is because, if somebody is faithless, he won't accept the troubles coming upon him from outside. And if the faithless doesn't accept, joyfully, the troubles, he won't say to the Lord: "You are my helper and my escape place" (Ps. 90: 2²⁰). And if one doesn't make the Most High as an escape place, he won't have his heart filled up with God's love. Therefore, this fruit that is the greatest amongst the greatest fruits, it is impropriated by the many of by all, especially by learning. This is because sparse are them who learn the taking of heed without being they taught through the striving of their living or through the warmth of their faith, as achieved from God. And what is rare, that isn't a law. That's why, one must search for a non-deceiver adviser, for out of his teaching and out of his example we to learn the things falling to the right and to the left of our attention, namely what is too little and what is too much, which come from the evil one, which the evil ones himself suffered from, by being him tempted. By unveiling these ones, the non-deceiver adviser shows us, in a doubtless manner, the spiritual path, and so we are going to walk that path easily. And if there is no adviser, one must compensate with toil. And, by calling God to his help, into the crushing of the ghost and with tears and into poverty, you do what I am telling you now²¹:

²⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 91: 2: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."; in ROB we have; Ps. 90: 2: "He will say to the Lord: "You are my helper and my escape; my God, I will hope towards Him". (E. l. t.'s n.)

²¹ Here follows the *method* of Nicephorus. The gathering of the mind into heart and the mind's steadfast encounter with God, by continuously remembering God, or by the ceaseless prayer, we have seen it recommended and practiced by all the saints mentioned by Nicephorus in the introduction of his method, and one can invoke many other examples and texts from the previous spiritual fathers, in order to uphold this method.

What Nicephorus brings new in his method, it is a more precise mode that the mind can be gathered and hold within heart, in the same time with ceaselessly uttering the Prayer to Jesus. This method became, in its essence, a general practice in the XIV Century, amongst the monks so-called hesychasts, and if not the method itself, then at least the ceaseless Prayer to Jesus, namely the second part of the method of Nicephorus, it became general practice to the eastern monks, ever since.

The practice used by the first one it has been consisting, up to these days, of a certain association of the two parts of the Prayer to Jesus with the inhaling and exhaling of the air. In the same time with the inhalation of the air, one says the words: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God", and in the same time with exhalation of the air one says the words: "have mercy on me the sinner".

What Nicephorus brought new, as method of gathering the mind within heart, it was just this joining of the act of sending the mind within heart in the same time with the air; but he didn't talk also about the joining of the two parts of the Prayer to Jesus with the inhalation and the exhalation of the air. He spoke only about a continuous sending of the mind into the heart in the same time ("together") with the continuously repeated inhalation and with the repetition of the ceaseless prayer. Properly said, he recommended the use of the continuously repeated respiration of the air, rather as a means for ceaselessly maintaining the mind within heart, and for ceaselessly uttering the Prayer to Jesus. The mind is always maintained within heart, as well as the prayer, only for one doesn't forget to always make the effort of focusing his mind within his heart, and for he makes the effort for continuously repeating the prayer. Nicephorus said that, by this, the mind is habituated "not to quickly get off the mind". The mind doesn't remain fixed within heart in a static mode, neither does the prayer the mind's, and the prayer's persist within heart, as an uninterrupted fact, but, in the same time, it is a living, dynamic fact, it is a fact of will for repeating the mind's gathering within heart and for repeating the prayer. After all, the same thing happens with the air too: the air is always within heart, namely the air doesn't totally exit the heart, but the air is also sent within heart. Saint Gregory Palamas bring, in addition to that, the explanation that what is being sent within heart, it isn't the mind as essence, but it is the mind's work (*The Second Word from Triads I and II Against Barlaam*).

And in the generalized monastic practice, also, the exiting of the air from the chest, it doesn't mean the exiting of the Prayer to Jesus too, but it means only the moving of the attention from a part to another. Properly-said, the inhalation and the exhalation of the air form a dual whole, between whose parts there isn't produced any separation, neither an interruption.

But if the mind must always remain within heart, as well as the Prayer to Jesus, what Nicephorus still recommended for, in his method, the sending of the mind to the heart in the same time with inhaling the air? What he recommended for, namely, a thing that scandalized Barlaam and other adversaries of the hesychasts?

These adversaries didn't understand that it wasn't about tying the sending of the air within heart to the inhaling of the air, but it was about using the rhythmicity of the inhalation of the air as an occasion for the uninterrupted rhythmicity of the effort for maintaining the mind, or the attention, within heart, and, in the same time with that, in remembering God. the uninterrupted rhythmicity of the respiration it is a means or an occasion for ceaselessly renewing the memory of God and, by that, for gathering the thought from the outside realities to the inward realities, and by that, for avoiding any interruption in ceaseless thinking directed towards God. An Occidental theologian, Herrigel, in one of his books, he told the same thing when declaring that we must thank God for any new respiration, for we have been able, or for we are able to breath once more, so that we can prolong our life with one more instant. (*Der Umbruch des Denkes*).

Hesychius of Sinai, living around the VI Century, he told: "Unite with the breath of the nostril the watchfulness and the name of Jesus too, of the unforgotten thought at death, and humbleness. This is for both of them are greatly useful" (II, 87; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume IV, p. 89).

One could say that we have here a parallel between a corporeal act and a spiritual act: inhaling the air and sending the mind within heart. It is a parallel which a voluntary act of

thinking is repeated in, parallel to involuntary committing an act of uninterrupted repetition, taking it occasion from the regular committing of that act. But it is only a parallel. The breathing is an act that not only maintains the body's life as a unit separated from the soul and from the thinking, but the breathing also makes possible the spiritual life. It is an act that conditions the total life of the human being, one that makes thinking possible. As such, the thinking is connected to breathing and that why it can make the inhaling as a conscious act. This means, on one hand, that the heart that the life is maintained through, due to the inhaled and to the exhaled air, it also upholds the cogitation; and the cogitation, at its turn, it makes the breathing conscious, it can penetrate it, it can make it not to be, even for a moment, stranger to the conscience. Of this may consist too, one of the aspects of the tight connection between heart and mind. When the mind is scattered in various thought, it is no longer consciously united with the breathing and with the heart, as a center of the life maintained by breathing, namely it no longer spiritualizes those ones. In such a case, both the mind and the heart lose. When the mind, namely its thinking, it is focused within mind through the rhythmicity of the breathing, both of them gain: the rhythmic breathing (and the rhythmic beat of the heart, we could say so), it remembers to cogitation to remember God, and the remembrance of God, rhythmically repeated in the same time with the breathing, it keeps attentive the thinking at the breathing and at heart, and it frames these ones in the conscience occupied with the remembrance of God, namely it sanctifies them.

Barlaam was the upholder of an abstract spiritualism, untied from the body, and by that he contributed to forming a non-understanding attitude of the effort for spiritualizing or for sanctifying the body, an attitude that became characteristic to the Occident. In East, except Evagrius, it is hard to find any father who didn't aimed to total sanctification of the believer, and who didn't ask, because of that, the union of the mind with the heart. It is true that, some of the fathers, by talking about gathering the mind within heart, they say, in the same time, that by that, the mind gathers in itself. But by that, they understand the heart as a center of the whole life, so of the cogitation too.

Maybe in this sense some of them reckoned, as Palamas says, as a vehicle of the cogitation "the most middle point and the cleanest point of the souly ghost", while others placed the understanding in the brain. And maybe that is the way that we must understand the adhesion of Palamas to the first opinion. "We too, though we do not reckon the soul inside as in a vessel, because the soul is incorporeal, neither outside, for the soul is united with the body, we still know for sure, that our thinking power stays within heart as in an organ" (Word II from Triad I against Barlaam, at P. Hristou, *quoted work*, p. 395). For right in this place Palamas says also that the cogitation has the heart not as an exclusive organ, but as prime organ, and that is for the heart is the most central point of the souly ghost, so it is some kind of center of the soul's life, one that maintains the body's life too. So, there isn't at him an opposition to the opinion of other fathers, that the mind is in the brain too (So says Meyendorff too, *A Study of Gregory Palama*, London, The Faith Press, 1964, p. 138). He doesn't operate a too strict separation between brain and heart as place of the soul and he admits the heart's role as vital center and, as such, also as soul's center, which the cogitation cannot be separated from. By tying the cogitation tighter to the vital center of the human being, the hesychasts gave the prayer the possibility - that is related to the cogitation too - of influencing the body. Thus, it was avoided the intellectualism without influence upon the body, as it was developed in the West.

Nicephorus though, he says that the cogitation is within chest. Basil from Poiana Mărului Monastery, an abbot living in The Romanian Country (this was a Province composing, along with other 4 provinces, the nowadays Romania (E. l. t.'s n.)) during the XVIII Century, he said the same. But it seems that by that, they do not differ too much from the opinion of those who sustained that the cogitation too it has its headquarters into heart. But by specifying that

the cogitation is within chest, it would want to show that the cogitation is in the center of the being, where the cogitation and the felling are united in. Nicephorus, by saying that the mind gathered within heart is like the man returning home from a travel, he wants to say that the heart isn't a stranger place to the mind, but the mind can travel too. But the mind feels fully happy only when returning within heart, or home. The mind in sense of pure cogitation isn't whole, neither is whole the heart in sense of pure spring of the sentiments or of the vitality. Placing the cogitation within heart or within chest, it doesn't mean, though, that the mind, as spring of the cogitation, isn't within brain.

Anyway, the cogitation being framed in the integral life of the human being, namely in its foundation that is the heart, it must be imprinted with its conscience in all the body's acts, but with a conscience permanently preoccupied with the remembrance of God. Then, itself the act of breathing is imprinted by the remembrance of God, as the kneeling down can be imprinted too, or as any deed of word can be imprinted as well. So, it is sanctified the whole body and its acts, the whole life that is upheld by the heart and that spring out from the heart, for the cogitation itself has been sanctified, for the cogitation, by ceaselessly remembering God, it has deepened itself in the intimacy of the human being and it has imprinted the memory of God in the human being's spring of integral life.

Thus, it no longer appears as senseless the fact that Nicephorus the Monk speaks about the importance of the respiration as act of upholding the heart, and through it, of the life, and about the need for concentrating the mind within heart, to this rhythm of the respiration. By this, the cogitation becomes aware of respiration as condition of the total life of its subject, and it becomes aware of the fact that it must sanctify on itself by remembering the name of God, or to sanctify the heart as foundation of the life. The cogitation, by becoming aware of this foundation of the heart, it will become conscious of the fact that it doesn't originate from itself, but it has an ultimate foundation that is God. That heart that prays ceaselessly, it will become transparent to God, in other word it will become a sky to God, or the place of God, as some of the fathers say.

This tight connection between the thinking full of the remembrance of God and the bodily acts, in the first place of the breathing, it was reckoned by Saint Gregory Palamas as a symbolic connection, given the fact that the symbols is, in the same time, differing from what it symbolized and united with that. The breathing, the kneeling, the sign of the cross, the clean word, they become symbols of the spiritual life. Of course, when these acts are committed without remembering God, they won't be sanctified, and they their character as symbols will be weakened. Palamas says: "Some like these will call a man as having his soul into his belly button, on him who says: "The law of God is in the middle of my belly" (Ps. 39: 8), and on him who says towards God: "My belly will sound like a guitar and my entrails like a brass wall you have renewed" (Isa. 16: 11), as they will slander on all of those who express and call through symbols the realities of the thought world, those godlike and spiritual" (Word II, Triad I against Barlaam, at P. Hristou, *quoted work*, vol. I, p. 404).

If other organs of the body can rejoice of the work of God within them, namely they can be symbols, why couldn't the heart, as vital center of the human being?

Saint Gregory Palamas insisted in his two *Words* about prayer (II from the first Triad and II from the second Triad against Barlaam) upon this sanctification of the body by remembering God and by prayer, in defending Nicephorus's *Method*.

Nicephorus's *Method* wasn't the only method of the Prayer to Jesus, or it has been modified, or some of its aspects was clarified while the *Method* being practiced, as the practitioners found it convenient, on the basis of experimenting the *Method*. One of the modified forms that specified some details, it has been preserved in a few codices in manuscript, and it bears the name of Saint Simeon the New Theologian. But a thorough research demonstrated that doesn't belong to him. For it isn't mentioned amongst the saint's

writings, in the *Life* written by his disciple, Nicetas Stethatos (See at Fr. D. Stăniloae, *Viața și Învățătura sfântului Grogorie Palama (The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas)*, Sibiu, 1938, pp. 46-61). Still, Saint Gregory the Sinaite quotes some aspects of the mentioned *Method* and he attributes it to Saint Simeon the New Theologian. But because Nicephorus doesn't mention it, it seems that the *Method* appeared after Nicephorus.

It can be that, still in the time Palamas lived, some of the monks (very few of them) who were more skillful, they practiced the focusing of the sight on the middle of the belly and in their environment would have appeared the Method attributed to Saint Simeon the New Theologian, but Palamas doesn't mention this attribution. He still admits, though, that this practice existed, but he explained it due to the need for imposing to the stomach too, the healthy law of the mind, as restraint.

It is to be noticed too, that the Greek translation of the method attributed to Simeon, as published in the *Greek Philokalia*, it doesn't specify the recommendation to direct the sight towards the belly. This form of the text hints at the manuscripts which didn't comprise this detail. In addition to that, one must take in account the fact that, in the general practice of the eastern monasticism, from later one, it has never been used the Prayer to Jesus according to this method, except by some unskilled monk and very rarely.

Barlaam probably took from a very rare practice the affirmation that the hesychasts imagined that the soul is in the belly button, and he labelled those as "omfalopsichi". Palamas rejects, with indignation, this name and the affirmation that the hesychasts would have had such a faith. Some exceptional case of such a practice, which could last even after that, or the fact of its rare existence in the XIV Century, it determined Basil from Poiana Mărului too, to combat in the XVIII Century, the faith of some people that the heart would be in the middle of the belly (in: *Foreword* to Philotheos of Sinai, for instance in the manuscript of the Romanian Academia 1441). Besides, until recently, there was a popular belief that the heart is in the belly.

There were also, amongst the monks, some who composed their own rule in order they to be able to keep the ceaseless prayer. Gregory of Sinai disapproves this "idio-rhythmicity". Such an "idio-rhythmicity" could have been also the focusing of the sight towards the middle of the belly.

In the form that comprises the detail of focusing the sight towards the middle of the belly, the method attributed to Saint Simeon was published by the catholic theologian J. Hausherr S. I., under the title as: *Μέθοδος της ιερας προσευχης και προβοχης*, in: *Orientalia Christiana*, 1927, no. 36, pp. 101-210. But it is curious that, by looking at this text, one can ascertain in it a contradiction: on one hand, it is asked for the sight to be directed towards the belly button, and, immediately after, it is added: "in order the interior to be searched with the mind and to be found the place of the heart". It seems that the first recommendation is interpolated. This is because of not being natural that, by looking at the belly button, one to search, later, the place of the heart. The neo-Greek text speaks only about the searching of the place of the heart. And this recommendation is logical, by the fact that doesn't asks, from the beginning, where the sight to be focused. In this texts is directly told: "gather you mind from everything that is perishing and vain and lean the lower part of your face, or your chin, towards your chest, for, thus, you to take heed at your own self, with your mind and with your eyes; and hold your breath, for a little, in order you to have there your mind too, and you to find the place where your heart is, and there to be, totally, your mind too".

The most interesting positive detail, added in this method, it is the recommendation to make rare the inhalation and the exhalation, in order one to not breathe too comfortably. This detail had been applied, to a certain extent, by some monks. But that doesn't mean anything else but a certain rhythmicity, one without hurry, of the breath, in order not to take place irregularly, unequally, for avoiding to disturb the rhythmicity of the remembrance of God, because that

You know that the breath we breathe it is this air. And we do not breathe it, except for our heart, for the heart is a cause of the life and of the warmth to the body. So, the heart draws the air in order to push its warmth out, by exhaling, and so to provide itself with a good temperature. And the causer of this work, or better said its servant, it is the lung that being created as without thickness, by the Maker, as some foils, it receives and it pushes out, easily, its content. Thus, the heart, by drawing through the breathed air, the chill, to itself, and by pushing away from itself the warmth, it keeps, without mistake, the order that it was created for, in order to uphold the life. So, by sitting and by gathering your mind, you push it and you force it through the way of your nostrils which the air enters the heart through, in order your mind to descend, together with the inhaled air, within your heart. And by entering there, the thinks after won't be without gladness and without joyfulness after that. And like a certain man traveling far from his home, when he turns back, he doesn't know what to do because of being so glad for being found worthy of meeting again his children and his wife, likewise does the mind when meeting the soul, and it is filled up with untold joyfulness and gladness. Therefore, brother, habituate your mind not to quickly get out of there. Because, at the beginning, your mind may be careless, because of being locked up inside and because of the restraint. But after your heart gets accustomed, it will no longer enjoy the wandering outside. This is for "The Kingdom of Heavens is within you" (Lk. 12: 21). By looking at this one, and

would be the expression of some unequal, disquiet, scared, confuse, angry, and passionate states of the soul.

In a less special form, the method of this prayer appears in the writings belonging to Gregory of Sinai, where it is influenced also by the method of Nicephorus and by the detail of getting the breath rarer from it form attributed to Simeon the new Theologian. He founds the rarer breath on the motif that, the exiting of the air from the heart it darkens the mind separating it from the heart, while the exhaling takes place, or it kidnaps the cogitation towards other thoughts. He maybe noticed the fact that the exhaling cause some weakening of the mind's focusing, a relaxation of the attention. But the most important and valuable detail in the form of the method as remained from Gregory of Sinai, it is the recommendation to unite the cogitation, here with the first half of the Prayer to Jesus, and there with the second half of the mentioned prayer. In this recommendation could be implied, maybe, the union of the first half of the prayer with the inhalation of the air, and to unite the second half of the prayer with the exhalation of the air. But he doesn't tell that explicitly (G.P. 150, 1316 D). He asks, on the opposite, to be repeated for many times the first half of the prayer, and again, to be repeated for many times the second part of the prayer, in order to avoid to move to easily the cogitation from a half to another.

by asking for it through clean prayer, the mind will reckon the outside realities as ugly and unpleasant.

So, like it was said, if you can enter from the first attempt the place of the heart that I have mentioned to you, you thank God and extoll God and jump and hold on tight, on this work, always. And this work will teach you the things you do not know yet. But you must know also the fact that, the mind, by reaching there, it must not be silent and staying idle after that. But the mind must have as its work and as its occupation, the ceaseless prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me!". Let your mind never cease that. And this is for, by keeping the mind unscattered, it makes the mind no longer vulnerable to be caught and touched by the enemy's baits, and it daily elevated the mind to the love and to the godlike longing.

And if, despite you toiling for a long time, o, brother, you still cannot enter the parts of your heart, as I have shown you, you do what I am telling you now, and, by the help of God, you will find out what you are looking for. You know that the cogitating part of each man is in his chest, for within the chest, by being us silent with our lips, we speak, we hold counsel with ourselves, we give way to prayers, to psalms, and to other things. So, while removing from it any other thought – and that you will be able to do it if you want to you give to this cogitation –, you give your cogitation the prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me!", and you strive yourself for, in any other thought, you to always shout, inwardly, these words. And by keeping this for a longer time, it will be open to you, through that, the entrance of your heart too, as I have written to you, without any doubt, as we have known it too, by experience. And there will come to you, together with the much desired and much pleasant taking of heed, also the whole group of the virtues, the love, the joy, the peace, and the others, which you will achieve through, your asks into Christ Jesus, our Lord, Whom, together with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, are due the glory, and the mastery, and the honor, and the worshipping, now and forever and ever. Amen.

**Of Theoleptos
Metropolitan of Philadelphia**

**Word about the
Toils of the Monastic Life**

And

**Word about
That Word Hidden into Christ**

Metropolitan Theoleptos of Philadelphia

His Life and His Writings

Metropolitan Theoleptos of Philadelphia was amongst the most influent personalities of Byzantium, at the end of the XIII Century and the beginning of the XIV Century. He was born at Nicaea, around the year 1250, where he got married and where he was ordained as deacon. When Emperor Michael VIII Paleologos accepted the union with the Church of Rome, in the year 1274, Theoleptos organized the resistance all over Bithynia²². That's why he was, probably, arrested and sent on an inhabited island from Aegean Sea, together with several monks from Mount Athos, who also resisted the union with Rome. Amongst those was also Nicephorus from Loneliness, who learnt a method of the ceaseless prayer within heart, while living on the Holy Mountain. While in exile, Theoleptos learnt from Nicephorus, the practice of the ascetic life and the mentioned prayer. Saint Gregory Palamas affirms, directly, that Theoleptos had Nicephorus as master in learning this prayer²³. This is hinted at also by an anonymous panegyric from Codices Paris Gr. 971 f. 249-250, where it is affirmed that, while in exile, Theoleptos "obeyed one amongst those athletes, who were ascetic too, namely to him who was the first amongst them" and "he learnt from that one, who knew very well and like on a science, the life according to god, the practice and the contemplation and the restraint of the mind"²⁴.

Introduced to this kind of life and prayer, Theoleptos became later one of the teachers of Saint Gregory Palamas in it. S. Salaville, because of not knowing, in this regard²⁵, except the

²² H. G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im Byz. Reich*, Munich, 1959, p. 693.

²³ *Word II, Triad II* (υπερ των ιερως ησυχάζόντων) *against Barlaam*, at P. Hristou, Γρηγορίου του Παλαμα, τα συγγράμματα, Thessaloniki, 1962, tome no. 1, p. 509.

²⁴ At Pr. D. Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura Sfântului Grigorie Palama (The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas)*, Sibiu, 1938, p. 58.

²⁵ Philotheos, *Encomium to Gregory Palamas*, G.P. 151, 561 A.

affirmation of Patriarch Philotheos, the disciple of Palamas, he doubted about its truth, because of reckoning that around the years 1310-1315, when Palamas was studying, Theoleptos was actually dead²⁶. But after the publication of the writings of Saint Palamas, one can see that Palamas himself affirmed that "Theoleptos taught us these, by his own mouth", "he being one of the men full of Holy Ghost"²⁷.

Philotheos precisely said about Theoleptos that he "introduced Palamas to the holy watchfulness and to... the prayer of the mind" (*Encomium to Palamas*, G.P. 151, 561). By these words, the teaching of Theoleptos proves to be close to the teaching of Nicephorus, that is called *About Watchfulness and about the Guarding of the Mind*, and that actually treats "about watchfulness and prayer".

After a certain while, the emperor liberated Theoleptos, but then the emperor threw him again in prison, because Theoleptos, by dedicating himself to a hermit life nearby his city Nicaea, he continued to uphold his position against the union with Rome²⁸.

After Pope Martin IV denounced, on 1st of March 1281, the union from Lyon, Theoleptos was liberated. After a short while spent at Athos, around the year 1284, he was elected metropolitan of Philadelphia. That happened after the death of Michael VIII Paleologos, and after a Synod from Blachernae (Easter, 1283), presided by Patriarch Josephus, it condemned the adherents to the union with Rome. When, in the year 1285, another Synod approved the tome written by Patriarch Gregory Cypriote, who reached the patriarchal throne in the year 1283, after the death of Patriarch Josephus – a tome that rejected, again, the proceeding of the Holy Ghost from the Son, but it admitted the eternal "shininess" of the Holy Ghost through the Son – Theoleptos signed that tome, together with all the anti-unionist bishops. Thus, it was undertaken an ecumenical step in this problem that separated so deeply the Church from West from the Church from East. But when a monk called Mark, by interpreting this tome he identified the "proceeding" from the Son, to the "shining through the Son", and Gregory Cypriote

²⁶ S. Salaville, *Formes et Méthodes de prière d'après un byzantine du XIV^e siècle, Théolepte de Philadelphie*, in : *Echos d'Orient*, Janv.-Juin 1940, tome XXXIX, no. 197-198, pp. 1-25.

²⁷ *Word II, Triad I against Barlaam*, at P. Hristou, quoted edition, volume I, p. 405.

²⁸ *Codex Paris 971*, f. quoted at Fr. D. Stăniloae, *quoted work, quoted page*.

upheld him, a part of the metropolitans who signed the tome, namely” John Chilas of Ephesus and Daniel of Cyzicus, they asked the patriarch to withdraw the tome, and they stopped remembering the patriarch at Liturgy, finally, the patriarch had to withdraw himself (1289). Theoleptos as well, he disapproved the patriarch, but not because of the tome, but because he upheld the interpretation given by Mark to that tome, an interpretation that could have a good effect, but also a bad effect: the reduction of the proceeding from the Son to shininess, or of the shininess to proceeding.

Patriarch Gregory Cypriote had to withdraw himself. But in a synod held in the imperial palace and presided by Emperor Andronicus II Paleologos, it was reaffirmed the Orthodox of the tome, namely the more nuanced attitude on the problem of the proceeding of the Holy Ghost, upheld by Theoleptos too. This attitude was adopted by Saint Gregory Palamas too. That attitude was contrary to that one upheld by the party that didn’t admit any eternal relation between the Holy Ghost and the Son, but they admitted only a temporary sending of the Ghost by the Son, and that was argued by John Chilas, and, during the XIV Century, it was argued by Akindynos and Nicephorus Gregoras, the adversaries of Palamas²⁹.

But another equally fiery dispute, it divided the Church from Byzantium, after the death of Michael VIII Paleologos. This one removed Patriarch Arsenius from office, because the patriarch condemned him when he plucked off the eyes of the young legit inheritor of the imperial throne, John Laskaris (on 25th of December 1261) and he replaced him for Gherman III (1265-1267), and then for Josephus I, who, in the year 1275, he resigned from office, because of not wanting to accept the union with Rome. Josephus, brought back in office after the death of Michael VIII Paleologos, he wasn’t recognized by the extremist followers of Arsenius. The moderate followers of Arsenius were reconciled by bringing the relics of Arsenius to Constantinople, in the year 1284, under the Patriarch Gregory Cypriote. Theoleptos adopted in this question too, a moderate attitude, one favorable to saving the Church’s unity. There have been preserved from him two speeches, which urged the extremist followers of Arsenius to come within the Church’s bosom. He

²⁹ J. Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, pp. 14-15. English translation of the book *Introduction à l’étude de Saint Grégoire Palamas*, Seuil Publishing House, Paris, 1959.

develops here the teaching that the Church is the body of Christ and only within the Church one achieves the salvation³⁰.

“What is especially characteristic to the thinking of Metropolitan from Philadelphia it is his sacramentalism, and his sense for the responsibility of the Christians for the Church; these two traits operate an obvious distinction between him and the spiritual writers of the Christian East, who are, at least apparently, not interested in anything that is not related to the consummation of the internal nature of the monk. The Metropolitan of Philadelphia, who fought against the internal dissensions of the Byzantine Church – the case of Gregory Cypriote and of the schism of Arsenius – and he showed an acute preoccupation with the unity of the local Church and with the sacramental unity of the believers”³¹. Once these people (the schismatics) are united with you, the Church grows up and the limbs are gathered together more tightly in a complete whole... The Church grows up in strength... Our only Head, Christ, He appears then as the ruler Who keeps us tied to Himself, and Who keeps us tied to one another through the ties of a sole faith, of a sole teaching, and of a sole Church”³². “The Son of God – says Theoleptos further on – made Himself man for you, and He lives a sinless life. Through the Holy Baptism and through the precious His blood which flow on the cross, he redeemed you... He formed local churches, each of those a Paradise, and He gathered us within them; But He founded the Church one in faith and in teaching... The trees of the Paradise are the Orthodox shepherds... who have been sent to churches, entrusted and charged with the duty of teaching and of ruling the Christians... The bishop is the mediator between God and people. The bishop ceaselessly raises, on behalf of the people, asks, prayer, and thanks to God. The act committed by the Orthodox priests and that is recognized in the “Holy Gifts”, it becomes the body and the blood of Christ; this is the effect of the epiclesis. Or the prayer, and of the descent of the Holy Ghost... Not taking part to the Holy Impartation, of staying

³⁰ S. Salaville, *Deux documents inédits sur les discussions religieuses byzantines entre 1275 et 1300*, in: *Etudes Byzantines*, 1974, pp. 116-125. These speeches are comprised in Codex Vatican Greek 1140, f. 24-52 and Codex Ottobonianus 418, f. 80 r. – 111 v. (Centuries XIV – XV).

³¹ Meyendorff, *quoted work*, p. 19.

³² At S. Salaville, *quoted work*, p. 123.

away from it... it means declaring that Christ wasn't but a man"³³.

J. Meyendorff declares: "Rarely one can see an Orthodox Byzantine who expressed in such living words the sacramental essence that is the foundation of the sacramental structure of the Church. Theoleptos has, of course, the merit of integrating the spiritual tradition – often identical to a spiritualization – of the spiritual people of the Christian Orient, in an ecclesiological and Christocentric structure. He is the precursory of the theological and sacramental rebirth brought by Palamas and by Nicholas Cabasilas"³⁴.

The underscoring of this characteristic of the writing of Theoleptos, it is welcome, but we reckon that the whole life of the spiritual men from East, it was tightly tied to Mysteries and to Christy. Before Theoleptos, Peter Damascene, for instance, he said that without the Mysteries officiated by priesthood, one cannot enter the Kingdom of Heavens (*The Greek Philokalia*, Third Edition, tome V, p. 186), and he presented the prayers uttered by the spiritual men searchers for quietude (hesychia) as being constituted, mostly, of prayer and songs of the public cult of the Church. These prayers and songs influenced the whole writing of Peter Damascene, and they are framed within his writing as in a spiritual peaceful and appeasing river, as in a great spiritual poem of remarkable beauty and harmony, of good spiritual fragrance, of thin analyzes of the complex soul's states. Not to mention the framing of the spirituality of a Saint as Maximos the Confessor, within the wide vision of the progressive recapitulation of all realities in Christ, as a giant cosmical Liturgy.

Theoleptos is only one amongst those who gave a more accentuated theoretical expression to the general trait of the eastern spiritual life tied to Church. He was compelled to do that by the divisions manifested at that time in the Church's life.

Amongst the deeds of Theoleptos related to his activity as archpriest, or as metropolitan, we mention also the fact that, in the year 1303, when the city of Philadelphia was surrounded by Turks, he prayed to God, and he saw the wonder that the city will be saved by the unexpected apparition of a Catalonians

³³ *Ibid*, pp. 123-129.

³⁴ J. Meyendorff, *quoted work*, p. 20.

army³⁵. But the activity that imposed Theoleptos the most, it was that of great spiritual adviser of the circles of the high society from Constantinople, and of the two monasteries, one of monks and one of nuns, from that city, bearing the name Philanthropos Soter (the Loving of People Savior). These monasteries were rebuilt by the Byzantine princess Irene Chumnos, who was married to despot John Paleologos, and who, after she became a widow at the age of 16, she entered the monasticism, in the year 1308, at the advice of Theoleptos, in the women monastery restored by herself – as he restored also the men monastery bearing the same name.

The work of Theoleptos, a work reckoned as “considerable” and left, up to these days, mostly unpublished, it is composed mostly of the writings comprised by Cod. Vat. Ottobon. 405, and they are speeches and advices addressed to the two monastic communities.

S. Salaville published the letter sent to the princess who was in a hard soul’s crisis, after he remained widow, and which Theoleptos recommended her through, to embrace the monastic life³⁶. After himself tonsured his daughter in monasticism, Theoleptos continued to be her adviser, and he was too the adviser of the two monasteries.

The longer text published in *The Greek Philokalia* (and in G.P. 143, col. 381-400) and translated in this volume, it is the letter Theoleptos addressed to young princess recently tonsured in monasticism. It is a short exposition of the rules of the ascetic life and the letter is called in Cod. Vat. Tttob. 405, starting with f. 35 v.: τύπος σύντομος ασκητικῆ βίῃ καταλληλός = *Rule, in Brief, Accommodated to the Ascetic Life*. In *The Greek Philokalia*, it is called as: *Word that Clarifies the Work Hidden in Christ and It Briefly Shows the Toil of the Monastic Life*.

³⁵ V. Laurent, *Une princesse byzantine au cloître: Irène-Eulogie Chumnos Paleologue*, in: *Echos d’Orient*, t. XIX, 1930, pp. 29-60. See also: Idem, in: *Echos d’Orient*, tome XXIV, 1927, p. 147. The most data on the life of Theoleptos, as presented in the mentioned studies, are taken from the panegyric dedicated to Theoleptos by Nicephorus Chumnos, the father of Irene Chumnos. That panegyric is edited by Boissonade in: *Anecdota graeca*, tome V, pp. 183-239. We are mentioned here the fact that Nicephorus Chumnos, an important Byzantine personality and humanist, after his daughter entered the monasticism, he became a monk too, in the monastery his daughter restored, and his wife become a nun too in the monastery where her daughter lived.

³⁶ S. Salaville, *Une lettre et un discours inédits de Théolepte de Philadelphie*, in: *Etudes byzantines* 1947, pp. 101-115. The letter is comprised in cod. Ottob. Greek 405.

But the text is published in *The Greek Philokalia* without the Introduction directly addressed to the princess and the feminine pronoun of the princess was changed for a masculine pronoun. Salaville published this introduction too. In this introduction, Theoleptos praises Irene for the fact that, while being an empress in the world, she became empress upon passions³⁷.

With these letters, Theoleptos inaugurated the series of the other writings he later on addressed to the inhabitants of the two monasteries. Theoleptos became thus “one of the most famous spiritual advisers of the XIV Century”³⁸.

Amongst the writing belonging to Theoleptos comprised in Cod. Vat. Ottob. 405, Salaville mentioned: *About Watchfulness and Prayer* (περι νήψεως και προσευχης) (quoted Cod. F. 22 v – 53 r.); *About Appeasement and Prayer* (περι ησυχίας και προσευχης) (quoted Cod. F. 78 v – 83 r.). These are rather explanation of the prayer than methods³⁹.

In another writing: *The Teaching about the Duties of the Life in Community* (quoted Cod. F. 93 r. – 105 v.), Theoleptos shows the superiority of the life in community upon the monastic life by one’s own⁴⁰. Theoleptos proved himself, once more, as cherishing the spiritual life within Church.

Living in Constantinople at the beginning of the XIV Century and unfolding his activity as spiritual adviser within the circles close to the imperial court, there was no wonder that Theoleptos could be, after the year 1310 and before the year 1317 (namely, when Palamas was 15-20 year of age) one of the first guides of the young Gregory Palamas in the spiritual life.

Following to M. Jugie, who contests to Palamas, by and large, any special education, Salaville adds: “Anyway... nothing seems to allow us to hold Theoleptos responsible for the aberrations reproached to Palamas”⁴¹. We ask: reproached by whom? Salaville omits saying that the reproaches belonged to Barlaam, to Akindynos, and to Nicephorus Gregoras, and not to

³⁷ S. Salaville, *Formes et méthodes...*, in: *Echos d’Orient*, Janv. – Juin, tome XXXIX, no. 197-198, pp. 1-25.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁰ S. Salaville, *La vie monastique au début du XIVe siècle*, in: *Echos d’Orient*, 1944, pp. 119-125.

⁴¹ S. Salaville, in *Formes et méthodes...*, contests the fact that Theoleptos would have been one of the first guides of Gregory Palamas.

the Church that, on the opposite, it condemns the teaching of the three mentioned ones. In this case, the aberrations belonging to Palamas become, according to Salaville, the “aberrations” of the Orthodox Church.

Actually, the disciple of Theoleptos, Princess Irene (Eulogia according to her monastic name) took attitude against Palamas, after the year 1340. But we cannot be sure if Theoleptos would have done the same, if he had lived, after Palamas defended, in his writings, the prayer of the heart as practiced by the monks from Mount Athos, and the teaching about the uncreated energies, as involved in the godlike light which the practitioners were imparted with after a long practice of it. A contrary, in the fact that Palamas, in the *Filioque* matter, he upholds and the develops – in the teaching on the irradiation of the godlike light of the Ghost, out of Christ, within the spiritualized people – the teaching belonging to Gregory Cypriote about the “shininess” of the Holy Ghost within the Son, Palamas showed himself as close to Theoleptos, and contrary to the opposite party: Barlaam, Akindynos, Gregoras, and Irene Chumnos.

Theoleptos had the occasion to develop in his advices, directly, the teaching about the godlike light and about the uncreated energies. But that seems to us as being involved in the content of his text as published in the *Philokalia*. And we are trying to argue that in the footnotes.

Theoleptos probably lived around the years 1324-1325⁴². The two writings given by us in the present volume, and the short biographical note preceding them in *The Greek Philokalia*, have been translated in the Romanian language too, and they are, for instance, given in the manuscript no. 9 (XVIII Century), f. 33 r. – 59 r.⁴³ from the library of Neamț Monastery.

⁴² H. G. Beck, *quoted work*, p. 693.

⁴³ According to the description belonging to Fr. D. Feciory, *Manuscrisele din Biblioteca sfintei mănăstiri Neamțu* (*The Manuscripts from the Library of the Holy Neamț Monastery*), in manuscript, p. 20.

The Word of Theoleptos, Metropolitan of Philadelphia, about the Toils of the Monastic Life

The monastic living is a tree having a tall crown and being very fruitful. Its root is the estrangement from all bodily aspects; its branches are the non-addiction of the soul and the absence of any attachment to the things which the soul got far from; and its fruits are consisting of achieving the virtues, the deifying love, and the uninterrupted joy out of these ones⁴⁴. “For the fruits of the Ghost are the love and the joy and the peace” and the followings (Gal. 5: 22).

Getting far from the world, it provides one with the sheltering nigh to Christ. And I call as world the attachment to the things submitted to the senses, and the attachment to the body. He who has estranged himself from these, into the knowledge of the truth, he attaches himself to Christ, and he gains Christ’s love, for which, by rejecting all the realities of the world, he has bought the much precious pearl, namely Christ⁴⁵.

Hoy have dressed yourself up in Christ through the savior baptism, you have rejected the defilement through the godlike bath, you have gained to yourself the shininess of the grace and the nobility as creature. But what happened next? Better said,

⁴⁴ The monastic living isn’t a barren living, but it grows up in content as a tall and thick tree. It grows up out of the root of detachment from the bodily things; on its dispassion of many kinds, as on some branches of the lack of egotism, there bud up the fruits of the virtues as equally many giving of the own life, as a gift, to God and to other people, gifts animated by love and culminating in that love that deified him who gives himself as a gift. These are fruits which uphold within soul a clean and uninterrupted joy, a joy that isn’t like the joy produced by the world’s things and successes, that is constantly interrupted by the lack of those things and successes, or without a fulness of substance.

⁴⁵ “World” isn’t called here the reality of the outside things, but a state of inward passionate attachment to the things submitted to senses and the attachment to the body. The monk uses these in a great freedom and spiritual detachment. That’s why, the monk uses the material things within the strictly necessary limits of the earthly life, “as not having anything, though all the things are under their mastery” (2 Cor. 6: 10). The monk rejects the world only in the senses that he doesn’t attach himself to the world as to the only and ultimate reality. This detachment from the world it is done for Christ, for the monk knows that in Christ he has ensured a non-passing life and infinitely richer than that the world can provide him with. In this sense, the detachment from the world it is the detachment into the knowledge of the truth. He who detaches himself from the world for Christ, he will be like that one who has found the much precious pearl, one infinitely more precious than the whole world, and more precious than any wealth. But into Christ the world isn’t simply denied, but it is found again in its true shininess, a shininess that comes to the world from Christ.

what suffered the man because of his recklessness? By attaching himself to the world the man has changed his godlike traits; because of the man's love for his body, he corrupted his image. The fog of the passionate thoughts darkened the mirror of the soul, which Christ shows Himself through, for Christ is the Sun known with the mind⁴⁶.

You have nailed your own soul on the fear of God, you have known the darkness of the worldly disorder, you have understood the scattering of the cogitation caused by noises, you have seen the vain attachment of the people to the much troubled life, you have been wounded by the arrow of the love at the time of appeasing, you have searched for the peace of the thoughts, for you have heard: "Search for the peace and follow it" (1 Pt. 3: 11); you have been wanting the resting of the peace, for you heard: "Turn, my soul, to your resting" (Ps. 114: 7⁴⁷). For that, you have understood that the nobility you have received into baptism by grace, but that you have rejected it, willingly, by passion within world, you must regain it by your good desire. And that's why you have stepped up to work, by entering the holy monastery, and by putting on the honored vestments of the repentance, and you have promised, with the whole your soul, to remain in monastery to your death.

Thus, you have concluded the second agreement with God: the first one, by entering the life from here, and the second one by hurrying up towards the end of the life from here. Then you attached yourself to Christ, through faith, now you attached yourself to Christ through repentance. There you

⁴⁶ Through the grace of the baptism, the believer has regained the spiritual shininess that highlights the original beauty of his dignity as creature of God. This shininess isn't separated from the shininess brought by grace, but the grace itself gives back to our nature its shininess, like the sunray, by lighting the face of the things, it shows their beauty. Our nature has been created as a transparent mirror that God to be seen through, namely the infinite light of endlessly rich and deep meanings. In itself the quality as creature of God, it is reflected God's light, or it is comprised the capacity of reflecting that light. The baptism gave back to our creature this connection with God by grace, and so it has reactivated the capacity of reflecting God's light. If it had remained as it had been created, in connection with God, not only the body would have been transparent to the soul, but also the soul would have been transparent to God, as a human person is transparent to the person whom is attached through love to. But the passionate or the egotistic thoughts, which the man turns towards himself through, as he would be the only reality, they have set a fog over this transparency of the soul, and by that, they cause the soul and the body too, to become non-transparent to God.

⁴⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 116: 7: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."; in ROB we have: "Return, my soul, to your rest, for the Lord has done good to you." (E. l. t.'s n.)

found grace, here you have taken a duty upon yourself⁴⁸. Then, because you were a little child, you didn't feel the worthiness you were given, but later on, while you grew up, you knew the greatness of the gift and the fact that you wear a bridle to your mouth. Now, by living in a consummate thought, you know the power of the duty you have committed yourself to. Take heed, lest, by disregarding this promise too, you not to be thrown away like a totally broken vessel, in the outer darkness, where there is the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth. This is for, except the way of the repentance, there isn't any other way leading to salvation⁴⁹.

Listen to what David says to you: "You have put the Most High as escape to you" (Ps. 90: 8⁵⁰). And if you have chosen that life according to Christ, that life full of harshness, there won't come to you evilness from the worldly life; for you have chosen to repent yourself, there won't be attached to you the love for money, the delectation, the honoring, the adornment, or the unrestraint of the senses; there won't persist before you the lawless haughtiness of the thought, the mind's slavery, the fickleness of the thoughts, and any other straying and willing confusion; neither the love for your parents, for your brothers, for your friends, for your kins, all those things won't meet you any longer; there will no longer dwell within you the longing for useless and unnecessary meetings and dialogues. If you love the inward detachment from this body and soul, the whip of the pain won't come close to your soul and the arrow of the sadness will not hurt your heart any longer, neither it will sadden your

⁴⁸ While for the receiving of the grace of the baptism, and so of the original shininess, as reflection of God, it was necessary from the man's part the promise of the faith into Christ, as opening towards Christ, or the faith that the humanity of Christ irradiates the whole light of Christ, by becoming accessible to us, at the activation of this grace covered by the fog of the egotistical passions, the human being contributes with a new promise, with the promise of the repentance, to which some people commit themselves for the whole their life, under the form of the monastic repentance. Thus, the monasticism isn't but a steadfast power in the full work of the grace of the baptism, and it means assuming the duty of full co-working of the man with that grace. The monasticism opens the way not only towards a living with Christ within world, but it opens also the way towards a living, even from here, with Christ, in the future life, through a certain exceeding of the living in this world.

⁴⁹ This doesn't mean that there isn't repentance, and therefore salvation, outside the monastic life too. The monastic life makes easier a living into repentance, as the author is going to show in continuation.

⁵⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 91: 9: "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation;"; in ROB we have: Ps. 90: 9: "For on the Lord, my hope, the Most High, you have put Him, as escape, to you." (E. l. t.'s n.)

face. This is for the ones who have detached themselves from the habit of the pleasure, they have rejected their addiction to any of the mentioned things, and they have blunted the needles of the sadness. This is for Christ shows Himself to the soul that lives in ascesis, and Christ pours within heart an untold joy, and the spiritual joy cannot be kidnapped by any world's delectation or trouble⁵¹. The good thoughts, the savior memories, the godlike understandings, and wisdom's words, they serve him who lives in ascesis and they guard him in all the ways of his deeds according to God. That's why he tramples on all the irrational lust and on all the hurried anger, as over asp and basilisk, and he tramples on wrath as over a lion and he tramples on pleasure as over a dragon (Ps. 90: 13⁵²). And the cause consists of the fact that, the whole his trust, by being detached from people and from the mentioned things, he has tied it to God, and he is being enriched in the knowledge of God and within his mind he always calls God to his help: "For into Me, He says, he hoped, and I will deliver him; I will cover him, for he had known My name; he will shout out towards Me and I will hear him and not only that I will deliver him from them who trouble him, but I will glorify him too" (Ps. 90: 15⁵³).

Can you see the struggles of them who live in ascesis according to God, and can you see their crowns? Strive yourself, therefore, to make deed out of calling⁵⁴. And as you have made

⁵¹ Saint Maximos the Confessor said that the sweetness of the body causes the sadness of the soul and the sadness of the body produces the joys of the soul; or that the body's pleasure is followed by pain. Theoleptos, at his turn, he recommends the avoidance of the bodily pleasures as cure against the heart's sadness. But he immediately specifies that the soulish joy of him who avoids the bodily pleasures doesn't appear on the ground of a natural law of the contradiction, but by the fact that he who avoids such pleasures, he does that for his attachment to Christ. That's why Christ is He Who gives that man joy, or the thought that, by avoiding the pleasures, he has done something pleasant to God, and thus he has shown that he loves Christ more than anything. As loving and full of life Person, Christ gives him who is attached to Him, a joy that overwhelms the bodily pain.

⁵² In KJB we have: Ps. 91: 13: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."; in ROB we have: "Over asp and basilisk you will step, and over lion and dragon you will trample." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁵³ In KJB we have: Ps. 91: 15: "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him."; in ROB we have: Ps. 90: 15: "He will shout out towards Me and I will hear him; I am with him in his trouble and I will get him out and I will glorify him." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁵⁴ One chooses the monastic life on the ground of a calling from God. He who has listened that calling he must prolong in deeds his affirmative answer. Only thus the answer to the calling from God will be a full answer.

yourself lonely with your body, by rejecting even the thoughts about things, as you have changed your vestments, you will remove also the dialogues and those who are nigh to you by kinship⁵⁵. This is because, if you do not get rid of the scattering within the external realities, you won't raise yourself against those who stalk for you within. And if you do not defeat the ones waging war to you in the seen realities, you won't be able to defeat the unseen cunning ones⁵⁶.

And when you make the scatterings from outside to come to an end, and when you forsake the thought from inside you, your mind will ascend to the things and to the words of the ghost; and, instead of the habituation to your kinships, you will get accustomed to the ways of the virtues; instead of vain dialogues, born out of the conversations with the world, your soul will be illuminated and made wise by meditating and unveiling the godlike words which are moving into your cogitation⁵⁷. The unchaining of the senses becomes a chain to the soul, and the chaining of the senses brings the unchaining of the soul⁵⁸.

The sunset brings the night; the withdrawal of Christ from within the soul, in brings the darkness of the passions and the unseen beasts tear the soul apart. When the sun rises, the beasts gather themselves within their dens; there dawns Christ on the sky of the thought that prays, and all the worldly attachment is removed and the love for the body disappears, and the mind start at its thing, namely at meditating at the

⁵⁵ The monk must become lonely not only with his body, but also with his soul, in what regards the external realities. That's why he must empty his soul of the meanings of the things too, and to forget about the useless dialogues.

⁵⁶ By making the man to get scattered in the external things, the enemy sets hold on man's interior, which the man has forgotten about. That's why, by taking vigil, the monk must always pay attention to the things happening within himself, while avoiding to get lost in all sorts of inappropriate thoughts caused by the external things and circumstances, or avoiding the memories of some inappropriate things or circumstances.

⁵⁷ But, avoiding the scatterings towards the external realities and towards their related thoughts from inside, it doesn't mean emptying one's soul of any content or aspiration, but it means elevating one's mind, namely the highest part of one's soul, at the realities and at the words of the Holy Ghost, by deepening the mind into their endless meanings. Meditating at these words it will illuminate one's soul and it will make one's soul wise.

⁵⁸ Theoleptos summarizes here what he said before about the need for closing up the senses directed towards the external realities, in order to unchain the soul's wings towards ascending into the endless horizon of the godlike realities.

godlike realities, until evening (Ps. 103: 21⁵⁹), not interrupting the work of the spiritual law even for an instance, and not only committing it with measure, but until the end of this life and until his soul will exit his body⁶⁰. This is shown also by the Prophet who says: “How much I have been loving Your law, my Lord, I have been occupying myself with it all day long” (Ps. 118: 97⁶¹). He calls it as “day” the whole span of each one’s life from here.

Stop, therefore, the dialogues about the external things and fight the inward thoughts, until you will find the place of the clean prayer and the house Christ lives in, Christ Who lightens you and He sweetens you through His dwelling and knowledge⁶²; and He prepares you to reckon the troubles for Him as a joy, and to avoid the worldly pleasures as they would be an absinthe (as a bitter drink).

The winds arise the sea’s waves, and if the winds do not cease, the waves do not calm down, neither the sea. Likewise, the ghosts of the evilness stir up within the soul of the inattentive one, the memories about his parents, brothers, kins, close ones, banquets, holidays, theaters, and of all the other imaginings of the pleasure, and they command the sight, the tongue, and the body, to encounter those. By that, the present hour too is spent vainly, and the hour to come too, when you stay in your monastic cell, when the memories of the seen and unseen realities will be scattered. And thus, the monk’s life passes meaninglessly in worldly occupations, which carve their

⁵⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 23: “Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.”; in ROB we have: “The man will go out to his thing and to his work until the evening.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁶⁰ It is recommended that prayer that calls and brings Christ, the Sun of the light known with the mind, He Who banishes away the darkness of the passions. One must say this prayer without the least trace of interruption, to the end of his life. Obviously, this is the ceaseless Prayer to Jesus Who dwells, surrounded by light, within that soul that practices this prayer. Without actually indicating the method of the ceaseless prayer, Theoleptos gives here an explanation to the fact that, through this prayer, Christ dwells, with His light, within the soul. This is for, if out of any good person there irradiates a light, the richer will be the light that spring out of the All-Good Christ.

⁶¹ In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 97: “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 97: “For I have been loving Your law, Lord, it is my cogitation all the day.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁶² Here Theoleptos mentions directly the “clean prayer”, clean of any thoughts foreign to it; and he mentions too the place that prayer is done at, as being the most inward place of ours. It is about the heart that is, in the same time, the house that Christ dwells in, with His light that irradiates out of Him.

memories into cogitation, as the man's feet leave traces in the snow he treads on.

If we feed the beasts, what will us be able to kill them like? And if we live amongst things and thoughts of the usual and irrational love, what will be able to kill our bodily thought like? When will we live that life according to Christ, that we have promised? The traces of the feet on snow are erased when the sun rises, or they vanish when the water floods. And the memories carved into thought by the tendency to and by the deeds of the love for pleasure, are erased by Christ Who dawns within heart through prayer, and they are erased by the rain of the tears of humiliation too ⁶³. So, the monk who doesn't work according to rationality, when will he erase the former imaginings from his cogitation? The deeds of the virtues are imprinted into body, when you forsake the worldly habits, and the good memories and the godlike words are imprinted into soul when you erase, through ceaseless prayers done into cogitation, with fiery humiliation, the memories of the former deeds. This is for the light of the memory of the faith into God and the crushing of the heart, they shave like a razor the sinful memories⁶⁴.

⁶³ It is affirmed, again, the showing of Christ within heart, through prayer. But Theoleptos reckons that this prayer must be accompanied by tears of humiliation, or of pricking of the heart. It is a prayer full of the feeling of the own sinfulness and of the repentance for sins. That's why we ask in that prayer the mercy from Christ: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, the sinner". Only by strongly feeling the sinfulness and the repentance for the committed sins and only by continuously asking for the mercy from Christ, which bring Christ's presence within soul, there will be erased from cogitation the tempting images of the former sins.

⁶⁴ Here Theoleptos is speaking not about a sole ceaseless prayer, but about "ceaseless prayers". But it can be the same ceaseless prayer. He is asking here too, that the prayer to be done with the fiery feeling of the humiliation or of the pricking of the heart. Only in such a case, the words of the prayer or other godlike words and their memories and the memories of their meanings, they will be imprinted, by repetition, in a working manner, into the soul mellowed by them and by the humiliation accompanying them, after they will have erased the tempting memories of the previous sinful deeds. The cogitation cannot be neutral and static. Into cogitation are imprinted the words and the memories of the repeated deeds, good or bad, with their force that move the cogitation on the direction corresponding to those. One of these two categories, it erases the another. But of course, until the full predominance of one of the two categories, there takes place a contradictory movement, a tearing into the soul. When the godlike words and their meanings are imprinted, exclusively, in the mellowed hear, or in the heart crushed by humiliation and for the love for God, and by that the heart is totally open to God, a clear light, a light opposed to the darkness which lurk in the tempting memories of the sins, it makes way into heart. That light that then it fills the heart up, it isn't, according to the explanations provided by Theoleptos, a light of the theoretical knowledge, but it is a light of the obvious and loving feeling of the presence of Christ; the horizon that light opens, it is a

Take example from the bees' wisdom. The bees, when the know that the wasps' swarm are around stalking them, the bees will remain inside the hive and so they escape the wasps' attacks. So, you will reckon the useless meetings like some wasps and you will run away from them with the whole your zeal, and you will remain inside the shelter of the monastery, and from here you will try again to enter that stronghold from within your soul, that is the house of Christ, where one can see peace within, and joy, and quietude. This is for Christ, the Sun known with the mind, He sends these gifts as some rays and he gives them to the soul who receives Him faithfully and with love for kindness, as a reward⁶⁵.

So, while you sit at the table, you will remember God, and you will raise your mind from everything and, you will throw your mind, voicelessly, towards God. And you will pour the whole feeling of your heart before Him and you will attach yourself, through love, to Him⁶⁶. This is for the remembrance of God it means seeing God, and that attracts the look and the desire of the mind towards Him and it envelops the mind in the

horizon of the communion with Christ, a horizon entered by that heart that got out of the narrowness of the prison within the limits of the own self, and it is a horizon of the life, of the cleanness, of the joy, and of the peace.

⁶⁵ This horizon is opened to the most inwards part of the soul, where the cogitation cannot reach until the tempting memories of the sinful lusts, preoccupied with egotistical pleasures, they aren't erased from the cogitation. These ones keep the soul not only locked up within his limits, but also in the most superficial area where those pleasures take place. When has got rid of them, the cogitation enters - through the ceaseless and perseverant prayer, or by ceaselessly remembering the name of Jesus, done with the warmth of the mind – the most inwards part, that part that is capable of the greatest feeling of the soul, or within heart, that is the house of Christ, and it opens this house to Christ just by entering this house. Only by opening, or by actualizing these heart's potentialities of feeling, the cogitation encounter Christ there within. Only there, Christ Who is the Sun from above senses and understanding, He gives to that soul who faithfully received Him at baptism, His light-giver rays, His rays giving spiritual warmth, and peace, and love, and joy. Again, Theoleptos says that Christ appears within that intimate interior of the man, only when the man's soul received Him faithfully and with love for kindness, of with love for kindness equivalent to beauty (to Philokalia).

⁶⁶ Theoleptos asks both for remembering God and for rushing the mind towards God, voicelessly. What can be reconciled these both like? Only by the fact that the mind can think at God but without using words. This is the so-called "purely thought prayer" (μονολόγιστος ευχή). This prayer it requires a special focusing of the mind. A prayer uttered through words, it often can be a formal prayer, uttered only with the lips, a prayer repeated by habituation, so that the man's mind forsakes the prayer and it lets itself to be entangled in other thoughts. But a purely thought prayer it keeps the whole mind concentrated on it. In this prayer the mind is and remains tightly attached to God. The power for this tight attachment to God it comes to the mind out of feeling a great love of the heart for God. The whole feeling the believer is capable of, through his heart, it is overpoured or it is directed towards God.

light from around God⁶⁷. By turning itself towards God, the mind, after it stops all the meanings which give images to the things, the mind will look at God outside any image⁶⁸. And in that nescience that overwhelms any knowledge, due to the unapproachable glory, the mind's sight is filled up with light⁶⁹. Without knowing Him Who is seen, because of the helplessness of comprising Him, the mind knows Him due to the truth of Him Who actually exists and Who is the only One above existence⁷⁰. BY nourishing his love and by strengthening his zeal with the richness of the kindness that springs out of there, he will be found worthy of endless resting and happiness⁷¹.

⁶⁷ But the feeling of the heart towards God, at its turn, it is produced by that spiritual (understanding) sight that sees God. Through this sight, God Himself attracts the cogitation of the mind and the feeling of the heart towards Himself, and He feels them up with His light. Thus, the tarrying of the thought at God, or remembering Him ceaselessly, it is produced by seeing Him, or, seeing Him it is produced by ceaselessly remembering Him.

⁶⁸ Seeing God is above any image. This is because the image is the expression of a meaning, and the meaning too, it defines, namely it sets up some borders. But God is above any definition, above any border, namely He is above any image or meaning.

⁶⁹ But this seeing of God it is, though, real, for God is real. This seeing of God is real knowledge. The soul doesn't experience a void, but the soul experiences a presence, a plenitude differing from himself. This is a knowledge that exceeds any knowledge. It is called as nescience in the sense of exceeding (*χαθύπεροχήν*); the soul is overwhelmed by the experience of the presence of God. This differs the presence of God and the knowledge of God from any other presence and knowledge. Although, this knowledge that is above any knowledge that defines, it is due to God's inaccessible glory. This is a second paradox. The third paradox is that that glory, though it cannot be defined in itself, it fills up with shininess the look of him who looks at it. We have an analogy in the fact that the glory of a human person or the kindness that irradiated out of that person, it is nigh to us but. Still, we cannot define it, though it penetrated us.

⁷⁰ Here are used notions belonging to Dionysus the Areopagite. But those notions receive here a practical application, they become lived. God is above existence, so that He is transcendent to our way of being - that is simply existent, or that is precariously existent -, and God is transcendent to our knowledge that is capable of comprising only this kind of existence, one that has something precarious, fragile, and uncertain in it. The supra-existence of God, it is experienced though, but as a firm and undefinable reality. God imposes Himself, through experience, as the supreme truth, as the truth by excellence, as the pure and simple truth, as the sole truth in the actual sense of the word. And we feel that He is the One Who gives us the power to notice Him as such, because we do not have in our precarious existence the organ capable of noticing the existence that is above our existence.

⁷¹ The soul that has reached - by gift - this experience of God, that soul has everything. Nothing attracts that soul higher. That soul is in a full satiation of this thirst for knowledge, in a resting of all his tensions, in an endless happiness. That soul doesn't get bored of what he experiences, for that reality is borderless, it cannot be defined. That's why that soul doesn't try to pass higher, for there isn't a border that he could cross higher, neither is there a border that soul could cross downwards, in order that soul to repeat the adventure of the climbing at the "much-more" that he has left, in an Origenistic or anthroposophical meaning.

These are the signs of the remembrance with full zeal. And the prayer is the *dialogue of the cogitation with the Lord*, the prayer's words reaching God together with the mind wholly stretched towards God. This is for the understanding, by uttering the name of God, and the mind by attentively and with limpidness following the calling of the godlike name, the light of the knowledge of God will overshadow the whole soul as a luminous cloud⁷². The zealous remembrance of God is followed by the love and by the joy. "I remembered God, he says, and I rejoiced myself" (Ps. 76: 4⁷³). And the clean prayer will be followed by knowledge and humiliation. "On that very day I will call You, he says, behold I have known that my God You are" (Ps. 55: 9⁷⁴). "The sacrifice of God, the humiliated ghost" (Ps. 50: 19⁷⁵). This is for the mind and the thought which are presented to God, through a strong feeling and through a fiery prayer, they will be followed by the humiliation of the soul⁷⁶. And if the mind, the word, and the ghost run and fall down before God, the first one by taking heed, and the second one by calling, and the third one through humiliation and love, the

⁷² The words of the prayer touch God, for the mind itself touches Him. There is no interval between the mind that talks to God in prayer, and God Himself. But the disappearance of the interval isn't due to a physical act of surpassing that interval, but it is due to a full attachment of the cogitation, of the understanding, and of the love, to God. God fills up, with His presence, the heart's understanding and feeling. The understanding is, in the same time, an understanding of the presence of the non-understood One. And it is uninterrupted. It is a light of the knowledge that envelops the soul as a luminous cloud, one that totally penetrates the soul and it makes the soul wholly luminous. But the soul has the clean conscience that this light isn't born within him, but it springs out of God as infinite and transcendent Person (Exod. 40: 32).

⁷³ In KJB we have: Ps. 77: 3: "I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah."; in ROB we have: Ps. 76: 3: "I remembered God and I trembled; I thought and my ghost weakened." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁷⁴ In KJB we have: Ps. 56: 9: "When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me."; in ROB we have: Ps. 55: 9: "My enemies will turn back, on any day I call you. Behold, I have known that my God You are." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁷⁵ In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 19: "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."; in ROB we have: Ps. 50: 19: "Then You will deign the sacrifice of the righteousness, the tribute, and the burnt offerings; then they will put calves on Your altar."

⁷⁶ Nobody can come close to God with a theoretical speculation, but only with a heart pricked by the conscience of the own smallness and sinfulness. In this state it is experienced the presence of God, as penetrating through the holes of such a heart that is pricked all over. God enters such a heart with the rays of His gentle, healing, and cleaning love.

whole man from within, he will liturgize to the Lord⁷⁷. “You shall love, he says, your Lord with the whole your heart” (Deut. 6: 5).

But I want you to know this too: lest, while reckoning that you are praying, you actually wander far from prayer, and you toil without gaining, and you run into desert. This happens when we sing with the mouth, when the mind is carried away and it is divided between passions and things, so that the meaning of the song will be defiled. But this happens to the cogitation too. Often, while the cogitation crosses through the words of the prayer, the mind doesn't follow it and it doesn't aim to God Whom the dialogue of the prayer is done with, but the mind is sneakily deviated towards certain thought. Then, the cogitation says the words by habituation, while the mind will slip away from the knowledge of God. Consequently, the soul too shows himself as without understanding and without settling, because the mind has been scattered in some hallucinations, or towards what the mind is stolen to, or it wants. And so, by not being present the knowledge into prayer, and because the ones who prays he doesn't present himself to Him Whom he prays to, what his soul could be sweetened like? And what the heart will be sweetened like, that heart that only mimics praying, but it doesn't' actually make the true prayer?⁷⁸

⁷⁷ We have here a worthy of memorizing definition of the inward Liturgy. It is a surrender of the whole man to God, through the strained attention, through the calling lit by longing (epiclesis), and through the pricking and the humiliation of the entire being.

⁷⁸ It seems that we would have here an echo of the methods of the prayer in three modes, one that circulated at that time and it was attributed to Saint Simeon the New Theologian, without actually belonging to him. It was published in the old Greek language by J. Hausherr S. I., *Le méthode de l'oraison hésychaste*, Orientalia Christiana, vol. IX, 2, no. 36, 1927, pp. 102-209, and in the neo-Greek language in *The Greek Philokalia*, and in G.P. 120, 701-710; see also other elements concerning that method at Pr. D. Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura Sfântului Grigore Palama*, Sibiu, 1938, p. 45 and the followings. But at Theoleptos the distinction between the three modes it is more clearly exposed. According to him, there is a prayer done only with the lips and not accompanied by cogitation, and then there is a prayer accompanied by cogitation but the cogitation remains at the logical meanings of the words, and then there is a prayer which the mind itself sinks in the experience of the presence of God. Theoleptos discerns between the cogitation that remains at the content of the words and the experiencing of God as present Person, by the mind that has entered a state of sensitiveness, of humiliation, of pricking, of awareness of the own sinfulness, and of ceaseless repentance. It is an encounter between the human person who has everything from God, and God as Person Who gives everything. As long as the mind moves only amongst the ideas about God, the mind behaves as one manipulating God as object, the mind being full of trust in its own power of knowledge, but the mind actually remaining far from the godlike reality. Only the prayer done with the mind it truly sweetens the soul and the heart, by filling them up with God's power and kindness, as Theoleptos says.

“It will be gladdened, he says, the heart of them who search for the Lord”. But he who searched for the Lord is him who comes close to God with the whole his thought and with a fiery heart and he removes all the worldly thoughts, in exchange for the knowledge and fore the love of God, which spring out of the ceaseless and clean prayer⁷⁹.

In order to clarify even better, the sight of the mind by remembering God, and the price the clean prayer has into thought, I am going to use the body's eye and tongue as icons. This is for what the pupil is to the eye and what the uttering of the word is to the tongue, likewise is to the mind the remembrance of God, and that is the prayer to the cogitation⁸⁰. Like the eye, by catching the seen thing with the sense of sight, it doesn't voice that out, but through the experience of the seeing it receives the knowledge of the seen thing, likewise the mind, by getting close, through remembrance and with love, to God, and by attaching to God with fiery feeling and into the silence of the simplest understanding, the mind is enveloped by the godlike light, and it receives the earnest of the future shininess⁸¹. And like the tongue, by uttering words, it unveils

⁷⁹ Thew clean prayer is the third kind of prayer, for it has been cleaned even of the logical meanings of the words, for he who prays has encountered God face to face, as person to Person, without the interval of any thoughts between them. Better said, in this prayer the cogitation and the understanding are elevated to God as to the unique and only living and person and indefinite and infinite content of the cogitation. The mind exited the state of separation from God; that's why it's no longer a mind that cogitates at God, but it is a person full of love towards another Person Who is God, a love that is fully produced and manifested only when a person meets another person, in this case being about the encounter of the human person with God as Person.

⁸⁰ Like the eye sees through pupil, and like the tongue expresses itself through word, likewise the mind sees God by remembering Him and it articulates the cogitation through prayer. We are seeing here, again, what Theoleptos discerns like, between that mind that intuits the presence of God as a whole, as Person, and that cogitation that the mind ramifies within, in acts directed towards partial meanings, separately defined, self-standing, and fully expressible. Within mind is unfolded the memory about God as Person, it is brought or it is kept His presence as Person, while into cogitation are listed up the meanings of the prayer's words referring to diverse traits and benefactions of God. But the remembrance of the same God, with the mind in state of prayer, and the meditation at the diverse meanings of God as comprised in the prayer's words, they must go together. When the cogitation parts with the mind, the prayer is no longer an emotional experience of the presence of God as loving Person, a Person worthy of endless love.

⁸¹ The mind isn't an organ for theoretically knowing God, but for emotionally experiencing Him, and also for undivided understanding of God, an understanding undivided in notions and above word. This unmediated experience of God's presence is equivalent to experiencing His

the mind's will to him who listens, likewise the cogitation, by heralding the short syllables of the prayer's words, often and fiery, it unveils the ask of the soul, to God Who knows everything, by persevering into prayer and through the steadfast breaking of the heart. And the breaking of the heart opens the heart to the loving of man God, and it makes the heart of him who prays, to receive a rich salvation⁸². This is for "the broken and humble heart God won't persecute" (Ps. 50: 19⁸³).

It happens likewise with the emperor from earth too. When you get close to the emperor and you present yourself to him with your body, if you pray with your mouth and if you look at him, you will attract the imperial benevolence. You do that too, either amongst the church's congregation, or in the loneliness of your monastic cell. By attending the assemblies with your brothers into the Lord, as you present yourself to Him and as you bring song to Him with your mouth, likewise you keep your mins attentive to word and to God. By that, your mind will know Whom it speaks and Whom it meets with⁸⁴. This is for, if the cogitation occupies itself, in a strained manner, with the prayer, the heart will be found worthy of a joy that cannot be stolen, and of an untold peace. And if you sit in your monastic cell, by yourself, attach yourself to that prayer from cogitation, with an awaken mind and with a churches ghost. And the sight will overshadow you, through watchfulness and knowledge, and it will dwell within you through prayer; and the wisdom will rest itself within you, through humiliation, and it

light, as earnest of the future light, a light that will be the full manifestation of His loving presence.

⁸² Another difference between seeing God, by the mind, and the prayer done towards God by cogitation, without foreign thoughts, it is that through the first one the mind is filled up with the light itself of God, whilst, through the second one, are interpreted in words, not to the people, but to God, the soul's needs, of the man's state of emotional breaking of the heart, in front of God. By that, between the mind's sight and the cogitations' prayer, there occurs a new connection: by communicating to God his state of crushing, of humiliation, the soul asks God to open Himself even more, to the prayer, and by that the prayer receives even richer salvation; or, the soul sees God even more, and that fact produces in the man's mind an even greater loving emotion.

⁸³ In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."; in ROB we have: Ps. 50: 18: "The sacrifice of God" the humiliated ghost; the broken and humble heart God won't persecute." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁸⁴ The mind will know not about the touch as an impersonal reality, but the mind will meet God Person, namely Somebody, or the Supreme Somebody.

will banish away the irrational pleasure, and it will bring within you the godlike love⁸⁵.

Believe me, for I am telling you the truth! If in the whole your work the prayer isn't absent, this mother of the goods, you won't fall asleep until you will receive the Bridegroom Who will take you inside and Who will fill you up with glory and with untold gladness. This is for the prayer removes all the impediments, it smooths out the virtue's path, and it makes it easier to him who searched for it. Take heed at the mode of the prayer with the thought: the dialogue with God it removes the passionate thoughts; the mind's looking at God it banishes away the world's meanings; the humiliation of the soul it banishes away the love for the body. The prayer, by ceaselessly uttering the godlike name, it proved to be as a dialogue and as a union of the mind with the rationality and with the soul. "For where there are two or three gathered in My name, there I am too, amidst them" (Mt. 18: 20). Thus, the prayer, by gathering up, out of the enmity through passions, and by tying together with itself the three parts of the soul, it unites the soul with God Who is in Three Hypostases. First, it erases from the soul the shame of the sin, through the images of the virtue, and then, by painting again the beauty of the godlike traits through the holy knowledge achieved at its time, it presents the soul to God. And the soul immediately knows his Creator. For "on that day that I will call You, behold that I knew that my God are You" (Ps. 60: 10⁸⁶). But he too is known by God. For he says: "The Lord has known them who are His" (2 Tim. 2: 19). He knows God for the cleanness of his image, for any images tends towards its model and it is tied to its model; and he is known

⁸⁵ Through cogitation, he who prays, he tells something to God, while through his awoken mind he stays, in a strained manner, in front of God as Person, and through his crushed and humiliated ghost he lives, with deep emotion, this encounter with God that fills his heart up with joy and peace. Through the watchfulness of the mind, he who prays, he notices the presence of God as a sight enveloping Him into light; through his cogitation, it will dwell within him, during prayer, the knowledge that gives some clear expression to the sight of God, or to the general living of God's presence. In the same time, through prayer, it will rest within him the wisdom, one that isn't, at its turn, a cold rational state, but it is a sweet feeling of equilibrium, of decency, produced by humiliation, which the rationality still isn't absent into, a delicate feeling that banished away the rudeness of the voluptuousness irrational and blind in its egotism, and it brings within soul the godlike love.

⁸⁶ In KJB we have: Ps. 56: 10: "When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me."; in ROB we have: Ps. 55: 9: "My enemies will go back, on any day I call upon you. Behold, I have known that my God are You." (E. l. t.'s n.)

for his likeness into virtues, for by that he both has the knowledge of God too and is known by God⁸⁷.

He who prays for receiving the imperial benevolence, he uses three ways: or he prays with his voice, or he presents himself while keeping his silence, or he throws himself at the feet of him who can help him. The clean prayer, by uniting the mind, the word, and the ghost with itself, through words it calls upon the name of God, through mind it focuses, without scattering, towards God it calls, and through the ghost it shows to God its humiliation and its love, and so the prayer earns the mercy of the without-beginning Trinity, of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the One God⁸⁸.

⁸⁷ The prayer unifies the three powers of the soul torn through passions. The prayer doesn't belong only to the mind, or only to rationality that defines, in meanings, the total intuition of the presence of God characteristic to the mind, or, the prayer doesn't belong only to the heart that lives, with its feeling, this presence. By having a complex character, the prayer is the only means for soul's unification. And only unified thus, and as become capable of living the reality of complex richness of God, the soul can notice the presence of God, and so the soul can unite with God. Or, vice versa: the prayer has the power to unify the soul, for it unites with the all-complex God, but Who is One in this richness, with God Who is a threefold unit: the Mind, the Logos, and the Ghost of life, or the Father, the Son (the Word) Whom the Father or the Mind reveals Himself in, and the Holy Ghost in Whom the Father and the Son unite Themselves in love. The soul is united with God through prayer, but without leaving his own complexity, for the soul is imprinted within, with the unitary complexity of God. And this imprinting is done through prayer, when the soul comes close to God, at maximum possible, and the soul opens himself to God. Thus, the prayer is a living communication, between soul and God, and vice versa. Through prayer come within soul and are imprinted also the virtues having their origin in the irradiant kindness of God. And, also through it, it comes within soul, the knowledge of God Who is experienced on diverse degree of intensity. This is for, through prayer, the soul sees and feels God in His spiritual and living richness. And the knowledge comes from both sides. This is for, through prayer, it is done a movement both from the soul's side towards God, and from God's side towards the soul, given that both God and the soul aren't objects, but both of them moves freely and with a great interest, towards another. The soul knows God through prayer, for through prayer it is activated the soul's relation, as image of God, with his model. But God too, He knows the soul, for the soul has opened himself through virtues, and in a culminant mode, through prayer, to God, for God Himself imprinted Himself, irradiating within soul, through virtues and through prayer. Properly said, the virtues as steadfast openings - but being always in action through deeds and through prayer - and animated by the remembrance of God, they are both ways which the soul can know God in, and ways which God know the soul in, for the soul is ever more open to God.

⁸⁸ Here, Theoleptos is showing that, through rationality, he means the word too. This is for, in words are expressed the meanings which the rationality gets out of God's indefinite, an indefinite noticed by the mind by focusing, entirely, upon the infinite God, in a complex but unitary feeling, perceived as Trinity of Persons by the man as person. And the man's ghost experiences this perception of the personal presence of God, as feeling. The rationality, or the word, when complete, it consequently expresses too the feeling experienced by the soul, in

And when you ascertain that you are weakening at prayer, you will use a book and, by taking heed at reading, you will receive the knowledge. Do not pass over words quickly. Study the words with your cogitation and gather them into the treasury of your mind. Then, you think at what you have read, in order your cogitation to be sweetened by understanding and in order the read word to remain unforgotten to you. Through this, your heart will be lit up by the godlike cogitations. “In my cogitation, he says, there will be lit a fire” (Ps. 38: 4⁸⁹). This is for, like the food sweetens the taste when it is thinned by teeth, likewise the godlike words, by always coming back within soul, they enrich and gladden the understanding. “What sweet are like, Your words, to my throat” (Ps. 140: 6⁹⁰). Take without your heart the evangelical words and the advices of the blessed fathers, research their lives, so that you will be able to think at those during night. Thus, when your cogitation gets tired of prayer, you will refresh it by reading and by thinking at the godlike words and you will make it even more zealous at prayer⁹¹.

You sing psalmody with your mouth. But keep a calm voice and watch your mind, while not allowing anything unthought at, from what you utter. And if something slips away from your mind, you will repeat that verse every time that

front of God, or: the repentance, the love, and the humiliation. But the humiliation, the repentance, and the love are met by God with His mercy and love. The soul experiences God in prayer and in this act of being met by God.

⁸⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 39: 3: “My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,”; in ROB we have: Ps. 38: 4: “My heart has become hot within me and into my thought it will be lit fire.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁹⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 141: 6: “When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 140: 6: “May their judges to fall of the cliff. My words will be heard for they have been sweetened.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁹¹ The words do not have only the role of expressing some rationalities, or the cogitation, or the understanding, that takes diverse aspects out of the indefinite living of the mind in its encounter with the infinite God, but they also have the role of nourishing this understanding, and to deepen the mind’s indefinite experiencing of God, and to place the mind, to keep the mind, and to deepen the mind into the state of prayer. In the first place, this origin and this power belongs to the words of the Holy Scripture and to the words of the prayers, which have been uttered most often, namely the words of the Church’s prayers. These words have been born – and they occasioned countless to countless people – the encounter between mind and God, and therefore they are the most appropriate to help the mind to ascend to this encounter, for they express this encounter in the most adequate manner. Also, the word which the people expressed with, the realities created in their transparency for God, these words too, they can be used for elevating the mind at God Who is their Creator, and at His traits, realities which is manifested within, through deeds, His love for us.

happens, until you will have your mind accompanying the uttered words. This is for the mind is able to sing with the mouth and to keep the memory of God in the same time. You can find out this out of the natural experience. This is for, like he who encounters somebody, and he is able to talk to that one and to look at him too, likewise he who sings with his lips he can too, to focus his attention on God⁹².

Do not avoid kneeling. This is for the kneeling symbolizes the falling of the sin, off from us, and it occasions our confession of sins⁹³; and the raising up from kneeling means the repentance, and it symbolized the promise for a life into virtues. But each kneeling must be accompanied by the understanding calling upon Christ, for, by attaching ourselves with our soul; and with our body, to the Lord, and we must gain the mercy of the God of the souls and of the bodies⁹⁴.

And if you give to your hands also a calm work, during the prayer done with the cogitation, in order you to banish away the sleep and the laziness, this too it invigorates the struggle of the ascesis. This is for, all the mentioned works, committed together with the prayer, they sharpen the mind, they banish away the idleness, they make the soul nimbler, and the understanding sharper and fierier in working the prayer within cogitation⁹⁵.

⁹² The mind can be active also while uttering the words of the prayer, but it can also persevere in remembering God. The words are animated and warmed up, while the mind does that, by the memory of God. If the mind gets out of words, the words become empty sounds, and the mind no longer perseveres in remembering God. Not only the mind ties the words to the memory of God, but also the words help the mind to persevere in remembering God. The only condition needed is that the mind not to get scattered when uttering the word about God or towards God, when praying. That's why, many treatises belonging to the Holy Fathers, when describing the mind's prayer, they present this prayer as accompanied by attention, or by taking heed (προσευχή και προσοχή).

⁹³ Philosopher Mas Scheller said that it differs the feeling which the man prays with, while kneeling, from the feeling he prays with, while standing (Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos). Here is being specified the nature of this feeling: it expresses humiliation in front of God.

⁹⁴ The standing up after kneeling, it expresses the promise of him who has repented, for living, from now on, a life full of virtues. He who has stood up, he must not forget that he hasn't stood up in order to continue living a life foreign to God, but he has stood up in order to live a life given, as a gift, to God, and in order to no longer commit sins. He maintains in his standing position, the remembrance of the name of Christ, and by this he maintains himself in connection with Christ.

⁹⁵ Contrary to the wide spread opinion that he who practices the prayer of the mind (of the cogitation), he renounces to any work with the body, Theoleptos sees in the last one a means for sharpening, for maintaining, and for invigorating the mind's attention while praying. Of course, these bodily movements must be, at their turn, manifestations of the prayer relation of

When the semantron is played, you go out of your monastic cell, looking with the body's eyes at the ground, while leaning the work from your cogitation on the memory of God; then, by entering the church and completing the community, do not talk to the one next to you, neither you wander with your mind in vanities, but let your tongue be occupied only with the singing, and make your cogitation steadfast by praying. And when the religious service comes to an end, you go back to your monastic cell and start doing the canon established to you.

Going to refectory, do not look at your brothers' portions, neither divide your soul in ugly suspicions. But, by seeing the food placed before you, give your mouth to eat, and give your ear to hear what is being read, and give your soul the prayer, for, by nourishing yourself both with the body and with the ghost, as a whole, you to praise Him Who satiates your lust with the good things.

Getting up from there, you enter your monastic cells with decency and in silence and, like an industrious bee, you toil into your virtues. When you accomplish a task together with your brothers, let your hands working, but keep your lips silent, and let your mind remembering God. And if somebody moves and speaks uselessly, in order you to stop the disorder, you get up and prostrate.

Reject the sinful thoughts, and do not let them walk and tarry within your heart. This is because the tarrying of the passionate thoughts, it gives life to the passions and it kills the mind. Immediately the thoughts attack, from the first noticing of them, you hurry up and scatter them with the arrow of the prayer. And if they persevere hitting and disturbing your cogitation, sometimes withdrawing themselves while some other times rushing upon you, let yourself know that those thoughts are strengthened by your will that welcomed them. They trouble and upset the soul, because of having right upon the soul due to the defeat of our free will it endured. Therefore, we must nail

the mind with God, as the words is too. By kneeling, it is expressed the humiliation towards God, by standing up it is expressed the promise for a righteous life, through diverse works done with the hands it is expressed the will to do those works for the own subsistence and for others', and by that is expressed the will for serving God, as God Himself destined the man, by creation. The body actualized its rationality through all the skills achieved through diverse activities. But the body is spiritualized or pneumatized, namely it actualized its rationality rightly, fully, and cleanly, through works crossed through by the remembrance of God, for this remembrance of God brings within those works the work of the godlike Ghost Himself.

those thought at stake, by confessing them; this is for, once defeated, the evil thoughts will run away. Like the apparition of the light scatters the darkness, likewise the light of the confession erases the thoughts of the passions, because of being those too a darkness⁹⁶. This is for the vain-glory and the idleness the evil thoughts had as their den, they have been destroyed and shamed by the confession and by the heavy suffering of the accomplishing of the canon. But when he who lives in asceticism tries to cut off, with the prayer, the thoughts which bother him, he cuts them off for a short while, and he stops their work by fighting them out, but he won't deliver himself forever if he still allows the causes which generate those, namely the resting of the body and the worldly love for honors, because of which he doesn't move himself towards confession. Consequently, he won't achieve either peace, because of keeping to himself the things of the enemies. And because of keeping to himself foreign vessels, won't those vessels be asked back for by their owners? And being those vessels asked from him and because of not giving the things which he unjustly keeps hold on, who will him be able to deliver himself from his enemies? But when he who lives in asceticism, by being strengthened by the remembrance of God, he loves to be despised and he loves to torment his body, and he confesses his thoughts without getting ashamed, his enemies will immediately get far from him, and by being his cogitation liberated, he will have the ceaseless prayer, and he will have, uninterruptedly, his thought at the godlike realities⁹⁷.

⁹⁶ We confess evil thoughts, we nail them to a stake, and we take away their power, for we shame them, as we will shame ourselves if we give them a dwelling place within us, further on. That's why, through confession, we detach ourselves from the evil thoughts. The light the evil thoughts are placed in, by confessing them, it shows their ugliness and it takes away their tempting power. Keeping the evil thoughts within us, it means hiding ourselves in a darkness; confessing them, it means that we want to be open and to not longer nourish within us thoughts which, because of shame, we keep them hidden.

⁹⁷ Only the passions are interested in keeping unconfessed the evil thought which nourish the passions. The soul liberated from passions he no longer is interested in keeping the evil thoughts within himself. But only the ceaseless prayer, done with the sorrow of the humiliation and of the pricking of the heart, by keeping the soul attached to God, it detaches the soul from the passions which the forgetfulness about God master in. The short prayer, by keeping the soul attached to God only for a short while, it banishes away both the passions and the thoughts nourishing the passions, only for a short while too. That's why is necessary the ceaseless and endless prayer, in order to uproot the passions and to banish away the evil thoughts, for all the time.

Reject totally, any suspicion that moves without your heart against somebody, as one that scatters the love and the peace away; and receive any trouble that comes to you from outside, manly, for that trouble occasions the savior patience. And the patience gives the gift of having a dwelling place and resting in heavens. By spending your days like this, you will live the life from here in content, being glad for the blessed hopes; and you will be moved after your death, daringly, from the things from here, and you will go to the resting places prepared to you by the Lord, rewarding your toils from here, in order you to reign together with Him. To Him are due the glory, the honor, and the worshipping, together with His without-beginning Father and with the All-Holy and kind and of-life-maker His Ghost, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Of the Same Theoleptos of Philadelphia, Word about that Word Hidden into Christ

1. That mind that runs away from the outside realities and it gathers itself into the inward realities, it comes back to itself. Then that mind unites itself with the word that the mind has it naturally in his cogitation and, through the word that the mind has in existentially, the mind unites itself with the prayer, and through the prayer the mind ascends to the knowledge about God, with the whole mind's power and loving feeling. Then the lust goes away from the body, and the whole loving of body feeling cease working, and the beautiful realities of the earth show themselves as unattractive. This is for the soul, by throwing behind all the things of the body, starts following the beauty of Christ⁹⁸, and it pursues that with the deeds of the

⁹⁸ Theoleptos is always preoccupied with the report between the mind and cogitation and word. The cogitation is that work that the mind enters the special relation with, with diverse objects or subjects. In this role, the cogitation unveils the meanings of the things and these meanings are expressed in words. Thus, the words are virtually involved in cogitation, and therefore in the mind, but the words also enrich the mind and the cogitation by expressing the meanings of the real things. The words are the expressed relations of the mind with the realities specifies through cogitation. Properly-said, the words indicate the realities, so that they depend on realities, but because the meanings of the realities are unveiled by the mind through cogitation, the words can be reckoned as existentially depending on the mind or on the mind's cogitation, directed towards the specified realities, or wanting to specify those. This is for, as there cannot be things which cannot be understood by the mind's cogitation, likewise there isn't cogitation of the mind without the capacity and the necessity for being actualized by unveiling and expressing the things and the persons. Thus, one can say that the potential roots of the realities are within mind as image of the Supreme Mind Who is their ultimate origin, and they are also images of the Logos or of the Supreme Word Who cogitates them, specifically, from eternity, and Who expresses them since He creates them and then in a concrete human manner, since he has embodied Himself.

But that mind that is directed, through cogitation, only towards material things, that mind is, somehow, outside itself. Only that mind whose cogitation is directed towards God and that expresses by works its relation with God, by specifying God's meanings in a somewhat improper and analogical mode with the things created by Him, but always being in an effort to exceed this specification, it is a mind gathered within itself, a mind that, through this gathering within itself and reunification of itself, it likens to and it is filled, in a superior manner, with God. This is for, God isn't perceived, actually, outside the mind, in the specified things, which divide the mind itself in its works, but God is perceived in the unified interior of the mind, and by this, the mind is united with God in a superior manner, for the man cannot be alone. Actually, the mind is either with the material things, namely united with the material things in a ramified manner, or the mind is with God Who is the origin of the things and of the mind. The need itself for being the mind at least with the things, or the sentiment that the mind doesn't find in things the whole truth, and the discontent of being only with the material things, it shows that the mind is made for God. That's why isn't good the mind to be alone,

appropriateness and the cleanness of the cogitation and singing: “There will be brought virgins to the Emperor, on His track” (Ps. 44: 16⁹⁹). By imagining Christ and by seeing Him, the soul says: “I saw, from before, the Lord in front of me, for He is on my right hand” (Ps. 15: 8¹⁰⁰). By attaching himself to Christ, through love, he shouts out: “Lord, before You there is the whole my desire” (Ps. 37: 9¹⁰¹). BY always looking at Christ, he shouts out: “My eyes always towards the Lord” (Ps. 24: 16¹⁰²). And by talking to Christ through the ceaseless prayer and by getting sweetened, he gladly says: “Let my speech get sweeten with Him, and I will be glad of the Lord” (Ps. 103: 35¹⁰³). This is for God, by looking at the speaking of the prayer, as One Who is loved, called upon, and summoned to help, He gives the soul who prays, as a gift, an untold joy. And the soul, by remembering God through the speaking of the prayer, he is

namely the mind doesn't feel good while being alone, or the mind just cannot be alone. But only out of that mind that has forgotten about itself, that mind that has fallen asleep to the specified material things from outside, there occurs the love for the true complementary reality of itself, and the love for the Supreme Mind than comprises the human mind too, together with the others, and Whom the human mind finds itself again in. In this union with God, that word that depends existentially on the mind's cogitation, it is a prayer word. This is for, God perceived in His merciful greatness, it inspires, as such, the prayer and the worshipping. Thus, the prayer is the mode that the mind's cogitation ascends in, at the knowledge about God, and in this, it is actualized the mind's loving power and disposition, which aren't actualized by partially in relations with other persons. The love for God is so powerful that it overwhelms or it stops the feeling of the body's pleasures and the body's lust for them. The soul is ceaselessly attracted by the beauty of Christ and the soul searched for that beauty. That's why the soul calls only upon Christ. This is the ceaseless prayer to Jesus.

⁹⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 45: 14: “She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.”; In ROB we have: Ps. 44: 16: “There will be brought to the Emperor virgins after her, her girlfriends will be brought to you.” (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁰⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 16: 8: I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 15: 8: “I saw, from before, the Lord always before me, for He is on my right hand in order I not to wobble.” (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁰¹ In KJB we have: Ps. 38: 9: “Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 37: 9: “Lord, before You there are all my desire and my sigh hasn't been hidden from You”. (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁰² In KJB we have: Ps. 25: 15: “Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.”; in ROB we have; Ps. 24: 16: “My eyes are always towards the Lord for He will take my feet out of snare.” (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁰³ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 34: “My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.”; in ROB we have: “Pleasant to be Him my words, and I will be glad of the Lord.” (E. l. t.'s n.)

gladdened by the Lord. “I remembered God, he says, and I got gladdened” (Ps. 74: 3¹⁰⁴).

2. You run away from your senses and you will stop the pleasure for the realities submitted to the senses. You run away from the hallucinations of the pleasant things and you will stop your thoughts addicted to pleasure. And your mind, by remaining without hallucinations, as one that doesn't receive either the imprinting of diverse sorts of pleasures or the thoughts of the lust, it will be in simplicity¹⁰⁵. And, by reaching above all the felt and thought realities, the mind throws its understanding to God, and it no longer does anything else but to deeply shout out the name of the Lord through a ceaseless remembrance, as a little child calls upon his dad. “For I will call – with Your name – the Lord before me” (Exod. 33: 19). And like Adam, created by the hand of God, he was made living soul through godlike breath, likewise the mind, created again through virtues, it receives a godlike change through the often calling upon God out of a clean thought and with a fiery feeling, by receiving life and by being deified by the fact that it knows and it loves God¹⁰⁶.

3. If you will exit the lusting for the earthly things, through ceaseless and clean prayer, and instead of sleeping, you will rest yourself of any thinking at the realities which are lower to God, and you will lean yourself, entirely, only on the remembrance of God, and there will be built within you, as another helper, the love for God. This is for, by shouting out the prayer, with the whole your heart, it makes the godlike love sprout out. The godlike love awakens the mind towards uncovering the hidden realities. Then, the mind by uniting itself with the love, it yields the fruits of the wisdom, and through

¹⁰⁴ In KJB we have: Ps. 77: 3: “I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 76: 3: “I remembered God and I was shaken; I thought (at God) and my ghost weakened.” (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁰⁵ The presence within mind of two or more thoughts, it divides the mind amongst those thoughts. The liberation of the mind from them, and the focusing of the whole mind towards God, it restores the mind's unity and simplicity. But in this simplicity, there is an endless richness and broadness of understanding, and a sweet feeling that is impossible to describe. This is for in mind's simplicity there is the ocean-like simplicity of God.

¹⁰⁶ The often calling upon the name of God through the cogitation unoccupied with other thoughts, therefore with the whole intensity, and through the fiery feeling directed only towards God, it unites the mind with God through love and knowledge, and it deifies the mind, for the mind is crossed through by the godlike presence. It is removed any thought that would be interposed between that mind that calls upon God and God Himself.

wisdom it utters the mysterious realities¹⁰⁷. This is for God-the Word named through the felt shouting out of the prayer, by taking the mind's understanding as a rib, it gives the knowledge to it, and by filling it up its place with feeling, it gives to it, like a gift, the virtue. Thus, it builds up the maker-of-light love, and it brings it to the mind that has gone out of itself (that has entered the ecstasy) and it sleeps and it rests of all the earthly lust. And the love is like another helper of that mind that has rested itself from the irrational addiction to the realities submitted to the senses. Consequently, it awakens the clean mind for the words of the wisdom. Then the mind, by looking at it and by getting delighted, it heralds to others the hidden feelings of the virtues and the hidden works of the conscience, by uttering words (by the ecstasy of the words)¹⁰⁸.

4. Get out of all the things submitted to the senses and forsake the body's law. And the spiritual law will be inscribed into your cogitation. This is for, like he who walks into Ghost he doesn't fulfill his body's lust, according to the Apostles, likewise him who has gone out of the senses and out of the things of the senses, namely out of body and out of world, he ends up walking into the Ghost and into the things of the Ghost. You learn this out of what God did to Adam before Adam's disobedience.

5. He who strives working the commandments and he who perseveres in the Paradise of the prayers and sits next to God by remembering Him uninterruptedly, God gets him out of

¹⁰⁷ The love precedes to the knowing of God; but the last one increases the first one too. The mind wouldn't know God, if the mind didn't love God, as you won't be able to truly know a human person if you do love that person. And, the more you know God, the more you will love Him.

¹⁰⁸ This is a symbolic explanation for the creation of Eva out of Adam's rib. The mind receives, as helper, the love, but in that love is involves another person, a person that make the mind whole, and the mind totally unites itself with that person. In this sense, it is not good the mind to be alone. But, as I said before, only out of that mind that has forgotten about itself, or out of that subject that has forgotten about herself / himself, and who has fallen asleep to all other realities, and even to itself / herself / himself, the love can be born. The love is built, in the same time, out of true understanding of the mind, as out of one of its ribs, one filled up with feeling, as with some sort of flesh. And this is done by God-the Word Who speaks to us when we call upon Him and only upon Him, after we have forgotten about all realities and about ourselves, for God enter the dialogue of love with us. Being this dialogue accomplished through words, these words represent the ecstasy lived by the mind in relation with the beloved One, in the first place with God-the Word Who has given the mind the capacity and the impulse towards word, or towards the another, through word, firstly towards God-the Word. The mind (vous) is, in the Greek language, of masculine gender (Adam).

the loving-of-pleasure works of the body, and out of all the movements of the senses and, by making him dead to the passions and to the sin, God imparts him with the godlike life. This is for, he who sleeps likens the dead too, but he is still alive, and the first thing is due to the body, and the second thing is due to the together-working of the soul, likewise is him who live into the Ghost. He is dead to the body and to the world, but he lives to the cogitation with the Ghost (brought by the Ghost)¹⁰⁹.

6. If you know that what are you singing about, you will receive the knowledge; and out of knowledge you will gain understanding; out of understanding it sprouts out the working of the known things; out of work it brings forth fruits the knowledge by accustoming; the knowledge by experience gives birth to the true sight. And out of this one, it sprouts out the wisdom shown in the words of the grace, which spread light, for the wisdom fills up the sky of the cogitation, and it interprets to the ones from outside the ones from within¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁹ The author continues likening the death towards the passions to Adam's sleep, a sleep that Adam awakes from, enriched, to the life of communion in love. Through the sleep towards the life according to the body, or towards the life in the loneliness that lacks the love, he is elevated to that live according to the Ghost, or in the communion of the love. This life comes to the man in the same time with the Ghost of Christ, next to Whom he sits, steadfastly, by ceaselessly remembering Him. This is for remembering Christ it produces the contact and the real communion with God. Where there is dialogue, there no longer will be distance and separation, but a real communication. The word brings to the ones whom is addressed to, power out of the life of the one who speaks.

¹¹⁰ Theoleptos gives here the steps that soul singing to God ascends on. They aren't steps of the general ascension of the believer, as those mentioned by Saint Maximos the Confessor (*Heads about Love I: 2; The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 37): the faith, the fear, the restraint, the patience, the hope, the dispassion, and the love, but they are the steps of him who has reached the joy of the singing. We aren't told whether that is about the singing in the monastic cells' loneliness, or in the liturgical community. The last one, probably, it isn't excluded, given the importance granted by Theoleptos to the life within the praying Church. The knowledge is born out of the joy of discovering the beauty of Him Who is praised by the singing. But only this full of enthusiasm knowledge, it gives power to the doing. The doing gives birth, through accustoming, to a superior knowledge, for through doing one reaches a higher kindness and one has in it a continuous encounter with God. It is a knowledge, by experience, of the done kindness, that is also a knowledge of God's kindness, one working within us, one that differs from the enthusiastic knowledge one achieves by the showing of the kindness from far, but untried in its reality imprinted within us. Out of this higher knowledge there is born a sight or a permanent sentiment of the presence of God. Out of this is born a wisdom that fills up with light the whole being and it brings within your understanding the words of the grace, or expressions which you interpret through, the permanent intuition of sight of God that envelops you.

7. The mind firstly searches for and find; and then the mind will unite itself with what will have found. The mind undertakes the searching through rationality, and the union, through love. And the search through rationality is undertaken for truth, and the union for love, for the good¹¹¹.

8. He who has ascended above the flowing nature of the present realities and he crossed beyond lusting for the flowing things, he no longer looks at the things from below, he no longer desires the beautiful things of the earth, but he has open for him, the views from above, he looks at the beauties from the skies, and he sees the beauty of the imperishable realities. This is for, as to him who wallows in the earths' things and who leans to the body's pleasures, to him too, the skies are open, but he has his eyes darkened, likewise him who despise the realities from below, and he turns away from them, he has his mind elevated and he sees the glory of the eternal realities and he knows the shininess destined to the saints. This one receives the love from God too, a love that descends upon him from above, and he becomes church of the Holy Ghost, and he desires the godlike wills, and he is borne by the Ghost of God, he is found worthy to be adopted by God and he has God looking at him with benevolence and with pleasure. This is for "as many as are borne by the Ghost of God, these ones are the sons of God" (Rom. 8: 14).

9. Do not forsake the prayer in order to take care of your helplessness, not even for a day, until you still breathe, but listen to him who says: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12: 10). This is for, by doing that, you will benefit even more, and your prayer will elevate you, immediately, with the together-working of the grace. This is for, where the comforting of the Ghost is, the helplessness and the idleness do not remain.

¹¹¹ There is also a love that upholds the searching for God through rationality. But as the One Who is searched through rationality is being found, as truth, He awakens a new love. But this is a love that unites with the searched One. This is for He is discovered as Good. The good doesn't differ from truth, but it is the images shown by the more deeply known truth.

Of the One Amongst Saints, our Father

GREGORY OF SINAI

Very Useful Heads

IN ACROSTIC

And other Writings

Saint Gregory the Sinaite

His Life

The movement of spiritual renewal, started out of the Holy Mountain during the XIV Century, under the name of hesychasm, it was dominated by two Gregory: Saint Gregory the Sinaite (1255-1346) and Saint Gregory Palamas (1296-1359).

But it is peculiar the fact that, thought the periods they lived in Mount Athos partially superimpose to one another, the sources do not mention any contact between them. That "Gregory the Great", whom - according to Patriarch Philotheos, the disciple and the biographer of Palamas - Palamas was a disciple to, it seems not to be the same with Gregory the Sinaite, due to the fact that he returned and died at Constantinople¹¹², sand that doesn't match the facts about Gregory the Sinaite. This absence of any mention about some contact between the two, it is the more peculiar as Glossia, where Saint Gregory Palamas was a disciple for two years, it was nigh to Magula, where Gregory the Sinaite lives with his disciples. Both of them left Athos around the years 1326-1327, because of the Turkish incursions, and they went to Thessaloniki, Palamas accompanied by a group of 11 friends, and the Sinaite accompanied by his disciples, amongst whom there were Kallistos and Isidore, future patriarchs of Constantinople. All of them intended to go to Jerusalem, and to Mount Sinai, and both of them returned to Athos, around the year 1330, after the Sinaite, who left Thessaloniki and was in his way to Jerusalem and Sinai, with Kallistos, they recently returned, and Palamas remained at Thessaloniki, with Isidore¹¹³.

Neither Palamas mentions the Sinaite amongst his teachers, as Philotheos, the biographer of Palamas, does likewise, or Kallistos, the biographer of the Sinaite mentions not

¹¹² J. Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* London, 1964.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Palamas, and the Sinaite doesn't appear amongst the upholders of Palamas in the fight of Palamas for defending the hesychasts.

Probably, the silence of Palamas related to the Sinaite, it is due to the will of the Sinaite, made known to Palamas and to Kallistos, of not being publicized his contribution in the dispute around hesychasm. But this silence may also be due to the fact too, that Gregory of Sinai left far away, for the Paroria Mountains, when Palama started his fight as defender of the hesychasts. Then, this may be due to the fact too, that Gregory of Sinai didn't start, probably, to fix in writing his teaching about watchfulness and about the clean prayer when Palamas had started the mentioned fight.

Saint Gregory Palamas, attracted, around the years 1337-1338, in the dispute with Barlaam, and then with Akindynos, and with all the other adversaries of the hesychastic movement, he stood out for his theological defense, while Saint Gregory of Sinai remained as a great guide for practicing this movement. "His preoccupation was not that of justifying the hesychasm in front of his adversaries, but of teaching his method to them who gathered around him"¹¹⁴.

Through his resounding theological fight and by his status as bishop of Thessaloniki – granted him for he was such a well-known personality – Saint Gregory Palamas played a great public role, while Sait Gregory of Sinai lived a hidden life, one of withdrawal, one of spiritual practice with his disciples, a withdrawal that increased around the year 1335, by settling down in Paroria, in the Tracia's Mountains, where he dies in the year 1346, a year before Palamas was enthroned as metropolitan of Thessaloniki.

The two Gregory, as upholders of the same movement, but playing different roles, they presumably communicated continuously through their disciples. Isidore, the disciple of Gregory Sinaite, was tonsured in monasticism by Palamas. In the year 1347, he ordained Palamas - shortly after his enthronization as patriarch of Constantinople – as metropolitan of Thessaloniki. And, by and large, the disciples of Gregory Sinaite from Magula signed the Hagiorite Tome towards the

¹¹⁴ *The Jesus Prayer in St. Gregory of Sinay by Kallistos Ware*, reprinted in *Eastern Church Review*, vol. IV, no. 1, 1972, pp. 1-2.

Synod from Constantinople, from the year 1341, in the defense of Palamas¹¹⁵.

Gregory of Sinai was born around the year 1255 at Kukulos, near Klazomenai, on the occidental shore of Asia Minos. Sometime, after the year 1282, he was taken prisoner by Turks and taken to Laodice, on the coast of Syria. The Christians from there paid the ransom, so he was freed and left for Cyprus, where he entered the monasticism, as rasophore. After a short while, he left for the monastery of Saint Ekaterine, from Mount Sinai, and he was tonsured in monasticism there. From Sinai he came to Jerusalem, and there to Crete. Here, an old monk called Arsenius, introduced him to the practice “of guarding the mind in watchfulness and in the clean prayer”¹¹⁶. That was a milestone in his life. Until that moment, his life had been a doer’s life; after that, he was elevated on the level of the contemplative life.

¹¹⁵ Kallistos Ware, *quoted work*, and Fr. D. Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura Sfântului Grigore Palamas (The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas)*, p. 188.

¹¹⁶ The Life of Saint Gregory Sinaite was written by Kallistos, who was patriarch of Constantinople (between the years 1350-1353 and 1355-1363) and disciple of Gregory Sinaite and follower of Saint Gregory Palamas. This *Life* was published in Greek by N. Pomialovsky, bearing the title: “*Jitie ije vo svea tich otta našego Grigoria Sinaita*”, Sankt Petersburg, 1894, according to the manuscript from the Synodal Library from Moscow, no. 280 (according to the old numbering: no. 281), a manuscript originating from the Monastery του Σιμένου from Athos. In that manuscript dating from the XVI Century, this *Life* can be found at f. 7-40, bearing the Greek title: *Μηνι Νοεμβρίου χς. Βιος και πολιτεία τον εν αγίοις πατρος ημών Γρηγορίου Σιναιτου, συγγραφεισ παρά του αγιωτάτου αρχιεπισκόπου Κονσταντινουπόλεως Καλλίστου*). Pomialovski affirms in the preface, that the whole text of this *Life*, was published by him, for the first time. Actually, this *Life* was published in Romanian translation since the year 1811, in *The Lives of the Saints* for November, at Neamț Monastery, under the title: *Viața și petrecerea precuviosului părintelui nostru Grigorie Sinaitul, scrisă de prea sfințitul arhiepiscop al cetății lui Constanting, Kyr Callist (The Life and the Living of All-Pious Our Father Greogry Sinaite, Written by His Eminence Archbishop of the City of Constantine, Ky Callist)*. “It was translated now, from the Hellenic language”. Metropolitan Tit Simedrea noticed, rightly: “It was for the first time that this “Life” was printed, in its entirety. The oldest Greek edition is that belonging to Nicodemus the Hagiorite, in *Νέον Εκλόγιον*, Venice 1803. That is a shortened text. The Russian translation published in *Afonsky Patewrik*, Moskow, 1876, it was done using this shortened text. (To be seen: Metropolitan Tit Simedrea, *Viața mănăstirească în Țara Românească înainte de anul 1370 (The Monastic Life in the Romanian Country before the Year 1370)*, in: “Biserica Ortodoxă Română” (“The Romanian Orthodox Church”), 1962, no. 7-8, p. 675, note no. 9). We used this “Life” in Romanian, in the edition *The Lives of the Saints*, vol. III, book VIII on November, Bucharest, 1903, pp. 1250-1338. This *Life* can be found in Romanian, translated from Greek, way before the year 1811. For instance, the manuscript no. 17 of the Neamț Monastery (XVIII Century), f. 1-55 r (See at Fr. D. Fecioru, *Manuscrisele din Biblioteca mănăstirii Neamț (The Manuscripts from the Library of Neamț Monastery)*, in manuscript, p. 42).

From Crete, Gregory crossed to Athos, and he crisscrossed the whole mountain in order to uncover other monks who were familiarized to the life he was introduced to, by Arsenios. Only after long searches, he found in the hermitage called Magula, not far from Philotheos Monastery, three monks who were knowers of the inward prayer. He settled down there. Thus, according to Kallistos, around the beginning of the XIV Century, the monasticism from Athos didn't know except the first state of the asceticism: that of the cleaning through deeds. This affirmation can be a little exaggerated, for we know that Nicephorus from Loneliness introduced, at Athos, the method of the clean prayer, and he probably still lived when Gregory Sinaite came to Athos, or, maybe he recently died¹¹⁷.

Though Gregori Sinaite reckons that the life dedicated to the continuous prayer can be better practiced in the small groups of monks living in hermitages, than in the great communities of the monasteries, he still didn't reckon that such a life cannot be practiced in such monasteries too, or even while living in the world, as Theoleptos of Philadelphia reckoned. Thus, he sent one of his disciples called Isidore, (the future patriarch), before that one was tonsured in monasticism, to Thessaloniki, in order that one to be there a "city hesychast", as model and guide to a group of laymen. "I do not want you to live here in the wilderness of the mountains – what would you do that for? – but in the world, amongst monks and amongst the people living in the world, in order you to be an example to all of them... by your silence and by your speaking"¹¹⁸. Actually, Isidore remained at Thessaloniki, where he left for when leaving Athos, together with the Sinaite and with Palamas, for almost ten years, and there he conquered, together with Palamas, a wide circle of monks and laymen, to practicing the clean prayer. Philotheos, the Patriarch of Constantinople, who wrote not only *The Life of Palamas*, but also of Isidore, he especially highlighted the austerity and the sermon of Isidore. Isidore was quoting the words about the "narrow gate" mentioned in the Gospel, and he was living "as those who has no material

¹¹⁷ K. Ware, *quoted work*, pp. 5-6. According to Saint Gregory Palamas, the one who left in Athos a strong tradition of the ceaseless prayer, he was Nicephorus the Monk (Word II from Triad I).

¹¹⁸ Patriarch Philotheos, *The Life of Isidore* (edited by A. Papadopoulos-Karames, Zapinski Istoriko-Filologiceskako Fakulteta St. Petersburgskago Universiteta (St. Petersburg 1905, pp. 77, 21-26).

possessions". Philotheos said that he learnt those from his teacher, Gregory of Sinai¹¹⁹.

By that, the Sinaite reconciled the ceaseless prayer with the missionary work¹²⁰. Even the frequent moves of Gregory Sinaite from a place to another, they were justified, on one hand, by the uncertainty at the time, from the Byzantine Empire, and on the other hand, by the will of spreading the method of this prayer in as many as possible regions, namely a true missionary work¹²¹.

This opinion belonged to Palamas too¹²².

Withdrawn, around the years 1326-1327 at Thessaloniki, due to the Turkish incursions, whom the monks from the small hermitages – without defensive walls – couldn't defend themselves against, Gregory Sinaite wanted to go back to Sinai; but he changed his plan while being in Chios, so he came to Constantinople, and after six months he went to Paroria, in Strandzha Mountains, at the border between the Byzantine Empire and Bulgaria¹²³. In the first place, he remained there for a while, but because of the annoyances caused him by the thieves sheltering themselves into those mountains, he came again to Constantinople, and then to Athos. But around the year 1335 he definitively settled down in the Mount Katakryomenos, in Paroria, where he died on 27th of November 1346. In this wild and isolated mountain, Saint Gregory Sinaite gathered other monks around himself, they built up two monasteries, a tall tower, and so they made of this desert place a "spiritual laboratory", a holy place of "doxology and ceaseless

¹¹⁹ J. Meyendorff, *quoted work*, pp. 34-35.

¹²⁰ J. Meyendorff, *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas*, p. 54.

¹²¹ K. Ware, *quoted work*, p. 7.

¹²² Patriarch Philotheos, *Encomium of Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki*, G.P., 151, col. 573-574. When, around the year 1326, he met, on a mountain near Veria where he settled down for a short while, an ascetic, called Job, who was arguing that the ceaseless prayer is possible only to the monks, Palamas strongly argued the opposite point of view, by affirming that the urge of Saint Apostle Paul: "Pray ceaselessly!" (1 Thes. 5: 17) is addressed to all Christian without exception.

¹²³ About the place where Paroria was, Metropolitan Tit Simedrea, *quoted work*, he says: "Regarding the geographical situation of the desert of Paroria, the Bulgarian scholars place it somewhere in the Strandzha Planina, but we reckon that the most correct opinion belongs to Nikos A. Bees, *Ein Buchgeschenk an das Madonna Katakryomeni Kloster*, in "Byzantinisch-Neugrichische Jahrbücher", Atens 1938, pp. 194-195: "The ruins of the monastic settlement of Paroria, that was placed on the border area between Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire, inhabited by Saint Gregory and his disciples, there still is – according to C. Jiriček –, in the village from today, the Great and the Small Monastery, between Adrianople and Jamblo".

praise to God”¹²⁴, and they helped not only the monks brought from Athos to advance into the life of prayer, but they were transforming all the people who came there and they tamed even those who were accustomed to a life of robberies and killings¹²⁵.

The spiritual connection between Nicephorus and Theoleptos it is shown by Gregory Sinaite by the fact that he too was searching for the same “mind’s prayer and watchfulness”, as those ones did. The prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me the sinner”, recommended by Nicephorus the Monk, it was practiced by Gregory Sinaite with the “pricking” of the soul, with love into knowledge, and in a fiery mode, as Theoleptos did too. In *The Life of Saint Gregory Sinaite* (Romanian edition quoted, p. 1267) it is said: “After that he remembered about quietude and the mind’s watchfulness... So, he placed these words in his mind, so that one could say that he nailed himself on the cross with Christ; and the words “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me the sinner” he was uttering them into the soul’s pain and into the heart’s crushing, with deep sighs, with ghost of humiliation, watering the face of the earth with fiery tears he was shedding from his eyes”.

In building his monasteries and in the possibility of settling himself down in Paroria until his death, he enjoyed the protection from Tzar Alexander, who destroyed the thieves’ gangs from around. The monks’ community from there received a more comprising hesychastic character¹²⁶. It was affirmed, by and large, that the community from Paroria served as a bridge between the Greek and the Slavic worlds. Personalities as Saint Theodosius of Trnovo, Saint Romil (Roman) of Kiev, Patriarch Euthimios of Bulgaria, Metropolitan Cyprian of Kiev, who were, ulteriorly, the factors for the great rebirth of the contemplative monasticism from the entire Slavic Christendom of the Middle Age, they previously were monks at Paroria and, the most of them, they were direct disciples of saint Gregory Sinaite”¹²⁷.

We have to mention here the fact that the movement from Paroria, and by and large the hesychastic movement, it had an

¹²⁴ At Pomialovsky, *quoted work*, p. 39.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 43.

¹²⁶ K. Ware, *quoted work*, p. 7.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*: at note no. 2, p. 7, he quotes A. A. N. Tachiaos, *Epidraseis tou Hesychasmou eis tin Ekklesiastikin Politikin en Rossia 1328-1404* (Thessalokiki 1962) and D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453*, London 1971, pp. 301-305 and 404.

important role also in the two Romanian States which were formed just around that period of the XIV century, and they also influenced the Orthodox Romanian Church and the Romanian monasteries which started to be organized right then. It is known the correspondence held between Patriarch Euthimios of Bulgaria - the direct indirect disciple of Gregory Sinaite, through Saint Theodosius, and relative of Gregory Tzambiac - and Nicodemus, the hegumen of Tismana Monastery¹²⁸.

But Metropolitan Tit Simedrea brought arguments to justify the fact that the Romanians had direct connections with Gregory Sinaite, at Paroria, and they brought the method of the ceaseless prayer to Tismana¹²⁹. Actually, around Gregory Sinaite gathered "multitude of people of several nationalities"¹³⁰.

Besides, it was an aspiration of his to spread the urge and the method of the ceaseless prayer whenever there were right-worshipper Christians. In the Greek text of his *Life*, written by Kallistos, it is said: "that as much as was possible he wanted and he desired with love for God, to bring everybody inside the rays and the shininess of the Good and All-Holy Ghost; then he didn't left any place amongst those from here, being strengthened and empower with the help from God, not only of the Greeks, of the Bulgarians, but also of the Serbians and *beyond* (them), in order him to make there too, through his disciples, the most zealous work, in order the good of the hesychia to be sown plentifully and brightly"¹³¹. This word *beyond* (ἐπέκεινα) was missed even by Metropolitan Tit Simedrea, because of not being mentioned in the Romanian translation. But what other right-worshippers would be *beyond* Serbians, if there weren't the Romanians?

But Metropolitan Tit Simedrea mentioned the direct opinion of the Moldavian scholar P. A. Sîrcu, the editor of *The*

¹²⁸ Hierodeacon Epifania Norocel, "Eftimie Patriarh de Tîrnovo și legăturile lui cu Biserica românească" ("Euthimios Patriarch of Trnovo and His Connections with the Romanian Church"), in: *Biserica Ortodoxă Română (The Orthodox Romanian Church)*, 1966, no. 5-6, pp. 558-583.

¹²⁹ Metropolitan Tit Simedrea, *quoted work*, p. 675.

¹³⁰ Archimandrite Arsenius, *Leatopis*, Sankt Petersburg, Second Edition, 1888, p. 505, and *Ocerk Jizni Patriarha K. P. Kallista*, tome I, p. 917. In Atonsky Paterikon, I, p. 340, the note. At Tit Simedrea, *quoted work*, p. 677 and the note no. 15.

¹³¹ At Pomialovsky, *quoted work*, p. 30.

Life of Gregory Sinaite in Slavonic¹³², that the settlement from Paroria was inhabited by Romanian too. Sircu based his opinion especially on a note written at the end of the Hludov collection of hagiographical texts, a Slavonic manuscript dating from the year 1345, not owned by Rumyantsev Museum from Moscow. The note, written in Greek, says: "These two fragments have been written by Fudulu, who translated them from Greek to Bulgarian... when I was at Paroria with the brothers"¹³³. Sircu's opinion was adopted by others too. But others contested the fact that this name is of Turkish origin, and wouldn't have passed so early, in the Romanian language¹³⁴. But, if that name passed to Greeks and to Bulgarians, why couldn't pass to Romanian too, who were living, in such a big number, amongst Greek and Bulgarians? Besides, one must notice the fact that this name, up to these days, it recorded a special spread and an accent of great familiarness, especially amongst Romanians. Metropolitan Tit Simedrea reckons that this name could enter the Romanian language through the mediation of other Turkmen people who lived at South of Danube: Pecenegs, Uzes, and Cumans¹³⁵. Besides, this name might be also a wrong translation of the name Fundulea, which in this form and in its abbreviated form as Fundi, it can be found today too, as a specific name amongst the Macedonian Romanians.

But the most decisive argument for the connection of Gregory Sinaite with the Romanians, Tit Simedrea reckons it to be the fact that Gregory Sinaite exchanged letters with Voivode Nicolae Alexandru of the Romanian Country¹³⁶. This news can be found in *The Life of Saint Maximos the Causocalivite*, written in the second half of the XIV Century by Theophanous, the bishop of Peritoria from Tracia (around the year 1350), who was hegumen of Vatopedi Monastery. This Maximos was one of the most famous ascetics in Athos, during the XIV Century, and he was very close to Gregory Sinaite. Desiring to accustom himself to the life of ceaseless prayer, he left Athos for Paroria, "towards

¹³² P. A. Sircu, *Jitie Grigorii Sinaita*, Sankt Petersburg, at Tit Simedrea, *quoted work, quoted page*.

¹³³ At Tit Simedrea, *quoted work, quoted page*.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 678.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ As we constantly mention, in order to avoid any confusion, *The Romanian Country* called as such, it is not *Romania* from after the year 1918. It is about one of the three Romanian Provinces (Countries): *Moldavia*, *Transylvania*, and *The Romanian Country*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

the end of Macedonia”¹³⁷. Some of the often dialogues on spiritual themes, between Saint Gregory Sinaite and Maximos Cavsoicalivite, seemed to have been witnessed by Theophanous, his biographer. In the *Life* written by Theophanous, it is said about Saint Gregory that, after his death: “Many amongst his disciples, after his death and trip to God, they came out as shining stars and they adorned the edges of the earth”, namely they reached the edges of the territory inhabited by right-worshippers, and therefore at Romanians too¹³⁸. In addition to that, Theophanous communicated a detail very important to the Romanians. It is about a correspondence held by Gregory Sinaite with the “emperors of the earth”, amongst whom he listed, in addition to the Byzantine Emperor, also the Tzar John Alexander of Bulgaria and Stephan of Serbia, and another Alexandru who couldn’t be but Nicolae Alexandru of the Romanian Country (actually, associated to ruling, by his father, Ioan Basarab (1310-1352) and then left as sole ruler (1352-1364). This is because in that area was no other Orthodox country, at that time. “And to the emperor of the earth, Andronicus, I say, and to Alexander, and to Stephan and to Alexandru, he wrote letters, for they desired to learn about his teachings, through epistles. Through that, the schism of the monks is spreading, in the places and in the cities of those ones, through the virtue and the teaching of our Pious Father Gregory Sinaite” (§ 18, 90)¹³⁹. But where actually multiplied the monasteries and the monks so much, at that time, if not in the Orthodox world, as there was the Romanian Country were, immediately after that, were founded the first organized monasteries? Theophanous, who was staretz at Vatopedi Monastery, he knew the Romanian voivode, through the donations the voivode gave to Cutlumuş Monastery from Athos, or by the fact that the staretz of the mentioned monastery, the future (nominal) metropolitan of the Romanian Country, came in this country in searching for help¹⁴⁰.

¹³⁷ This *Life* of Maximos Cavsoicalivite, written by Theophanous, it was published by J. Halkin, in “Analecta Bollandiana”, tome LIV, 1906, pp. 25-112.

¹³⁸ At Tit Simedrea, *quoted work*, p. 679.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 680-681. Identifying this Alexandru to Nicolae Alexandru, the ruler of the Romanian Country, it had been done by Halkin, who published in the quoted *Analecta Bollandiana*, *The Life of Maximos Cavsoicalivite*, saying in a note, that this ruler was „brother-in-law” of Tzar Alexander of Bulgaria.

In the document elaborated by the patriarchal synod from Constantinople, from the year 1359, that confirms the sending of Jacinth of Vicina as metropolitan of the Romanian Country, it is ordered that not only the laymen and the clerics from the Romanian Country to obey him, but also the monks¹⁴¹. So, there were monks and monasteries, even before the foundation of the Vodița and Tismana, maybe not so solidly organized and richly endowed by voivodes as there were the monastery founded after that time, but rather like some hermitages and small monasteries, born out of the zeal of the people.

The Romanian monasteries, placed under the care taking of a metropolitan enthroned in a steadfast chair in the independent Romanian state, they had been founded in the fiery atmosphere created by the hesychastic movement. So can be explained the fact that almost all their hermitages, placed on the top of a nearby hill, they are consecrated to the "Transfiguration", for the monks who were living in them, of in monastic cells near to them – according to the hesychastic method – they were aspiring to be imparted, for their asceticism and ceaseless prayer, with the Tabor's light. Besides, almost all the big monasteries which were founded along time, in the Romanian Country and in Moldavia, they had their antecedent in such hermitages or in the monastic cells of some lonely hermits, on some mountains or hills tops. So was possible to come to existence the first Romanian monasteries, nigh to some hermitages or to some monastic cells from a nearby mountain or hill. We have to notice too, the familiar and popular character the name of hermit¹⁴² has it to the Romanian people and its resonance as a very old word.

This atmosphere created by hesychasm it was an important factor in upholding the fight of the Romanian people for defending against the continuous attacks of the crescent.

¹⁴¹ The Academia of the Popular Republic of Romania, *Documente privind istoria României; b. Țara Românească, 1242-1500 (Documents regarding the History of Romania; B. The Romanian Country, 1242-1500)*, Publishing House of the Academia of the R.P.R. 1953, p. 27. At Tit Simedrea, *quoted work*, p. 674. So, at the moment Jacinth arrived to Argeș, he found, in the Romanian Country, clerics and monks and at least one monastery at Argeș, where he established the headquarters of his bishopric. Patriarch Kallistos knew that, amongst other sources, also from the fact that he lived at Paroria where Romanians were coming too.

¹⁴² Here we have a case of untranslatable word: *sihastru* (sg.) / *sihaștrii* (pl.). In Romanian language it brings up the special traits resulted from the combination between the terms: *hermit* and *hesychast*. Also, it could be rendered – but still losing some of its meanings load – by *anchorite*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

The Romanian Countries remained, thus, the last refuge of the entire hesychastic monastic movement, and of the fiery faith upheld by this movement, in the Orthodox world. The hermits were not only very familiar with the people, but also with the voivodes, and the hermits upheld the voivodes in their fight for defending the Romanian Countries, as last refuge of the life of prayer and of the right-worshipping. From here we can see that the hermits didn't occupy themselves with the ceaseless prayer while being totally disinterested in the life of the right-worshipping people, but the animated the voivodes and all the right-worshipper Romanians to fight for defending their Christian country, in order they top be able to worship Christ God, in it, in freedom; and not only them, but also the monks and the scholars from the other Orthodox peoples, who sook for refuge in the Romanian Countries, after their countries had been occupied by Turks. Nowhere else, the hesychasm, this world of the hermits, people living in hermitages (in places of appeasement = ησυχαστηρια), it hadn't such a decisive role in upholding the fight for defending the national territory, as it had in the Romanian Countries.

A massive spiritual presence of Saint Gregory Sinaite, better said of his ghost at us, it is certified also in the XVIII Century. The monastic spiritual movement from that century, it is related to the renewal of the practice of the Prayer to Jesus, under the influence of the writings of Gregory Sinaite. Staretz Basil from Poiana Mărului (situated in the mountains, at 40 km from Rîmnicu Sărat), were Paisius Velichkovsky was disciple, it insisted to reinvigorate this practice, through his speeches on the work of Gregory Sinaite and of Philotheos Sinaite, for all those speeches do not do else but they explain the Prayer to Jesus and they pled for it, on the basis of the writings of Gregory Sinaite.

The Writings of Gregory Sinaite

A part of the writings of Gregory Sinaite were published in *The Greek Philokalia*, by Nicodemus the Hagiorite (Venice 1782). In the third edition recently published, they are placed in the volume IV (Athens 1961), pp. 31-88. The text from *Philokalia* it is reproduced in G.P. 150, col. 1240-1341. Until now, there hasn't been published a critic text, neither a complete version of his writings. The text from *Philokalia*, as also the text from the G.P., it contains the following writings:

1) *Heads According to Acrostic, Very Useful*, 137 in number (*The Greek Philokalia*, Third Edition, volume IV, 31-62; G.P. 150, 1237-1299);

2) *Other Heads, Seven in Total* (quoted *Philokalia*, pp. 63-65); quoted G.P. 1299-1303);

3) *Detailed Teachings about Appeasing Oneself and about Prayer, in Ten Heads* (quoted *Philokalia*, pp. 66-70); quoted G.P. 1303-1312);

4) *About Appeasing Oneself and about the Two Kinds of Prayer, in 15 Heads* (quoted *Philokalia*, pp. 71-79); quoted G.P. 1312-1329);

5) *About What One Must Stay at Prayer* (quoted *Philokalia*, pp. 80-88; quoted G.P. 1329-1346).

The Romanian manuscripts from the Library of the Romanian Patriarchy, those from the Neamț Monastery, and those from the Library of the Academia of the Socialist Republic of Romania, which contain writings of Gregory Sinaite, whether they do not comprise less titles than mentioned above, they contain some more titles. Many of them have a *Foreword* by Basil from Poiana Mărului¹⁴³.

¹⁴³ For instance, the manuscripts no. 37, 79, from the Library of the Romanian Patriarchy. (See at Fr. D. Fecioru, *Manuscrisele românești din Biblioteca Patriarhiei Române* (*The Romanian Manuscripts from the Library of the Romanian Patriarchy*), in „Studii Teologice” (“Theologicla Studies”) 1961, no. 3-4, p. 438; and 1962, no. 11-12, pp. 381-382). Also, see the manuscript no. 33, from the *Manuscrisele Mănăstirii Neamț* (*The Manuscripts from the Library of Neamț Monastery*), in manuscript, p. 87. This *Foreword* is contained by another manuscript owned by Fr. Protosyncellus Gherontie Ghenoiiu, copied by using Latin letters, probably by himself, while living at the hermitage „Locurile rele” (“The Badlands”) from Gorj County. Also, there is the manuscript from the Library of the Romanian Academia 1889, f. 105-172 v. The *Foreword* belonging to Basil from Poiana Mărului, it can be also found in

The richest manuscripts regarding the writings of Saint Gregory Sinaite, the comprise, by and large, the following titles:

1) Of Saint Gregory Sinaite, *Fore-Speech* to this book. It is placed after the *Foreword* belonging to Basil from Poiana Mărului, and before the *Heads according to Acrostic*. This *Fore-Speech* belonging to Gregory Sinaite has the following sub-titles:

a) *It isn't our fight against the blood and the body. And what the war is and what the soldier and all the weapons from God are?*

b) *About the Three Parts of the Soul,*

c) *About the thoughts which all sins are committed through*¹⁴⁴.

2) At the writing called *Detailed Teaching* from the Greek Philokalia, the richer Romanian manuscripts add other four heads. Usually, they are introduced thus: "Until here into the Greek one. And into Slavonic issuing there are these words too". So, the writings of Gregory Sinaite were translated in Romanian from Greek. (This is mentioned in many of the Romanian manuscripts, as for instance, in the Manuscript no. 39 from Neamț Monastery. But these four heads were introduced from a Slavic source¹⁴⁵. We are going to translated these too, after the ten heads of the writing *Detailed Teaching*.

3) In the richer manuscripts are comprised the following writings too:

a) *The Ways of the Heavenly Providence;*

b) *About Self-Control;*

c) *About the Four Holy Beginnings;*

d) *About the Name and the Order of Each of the Four Beginnings;*

the Romanian manuscript from the Romanian Academia, no. 1621, f. 103 r – 111 r, but that one is not added to the work of Gregory Sinaite.

¹⁴⁴ The Manuscript no. 17 from Neamț Monastery starts with *The Life of Saint Gregory Sinaite*, written by Patriarch Kallistos, translated from Greek, and then it continued with *Fore-Speech upon this book*, belonging to Gregory Sinaite (namely, it misses the *Foreword* belonging to Basil from Poiana Mărului). By and large, the *Fore-Speech of Gregory Sinaite* is subdivided in these three titles. Likewise, in the Manuscript no. 33 from Neamț Monastery and in the Manuscript no. 35 from the Library of the Romanian Patriarchy.

We do not give this piece, in the present volume, with all its three chapters, especially because the chapters *b* and *c* are a very general summary of what was known from the previous fathers. On the other hand, they theme is comprised, much widely, but in a special manner, in the heads according to acrostic no. 77-79, 91.

¹⁴⁵ Manuscript no. 35 and 79 from the Library of the Romanian Patriarchy. These four heads are added also in the manuscript belonging to Protosyncellus Ghenoiu.

- e) *About the Holy Beginning of the Church;*
- f) *About the Rule of the Middle Lonely Life;*
- g) *Explanation about the Holy Beginning;*
- h) *Explanation about the Holy Settling Down;*
- i) *Which is the Way of the Monastic Life and which Are the true Traits of Each of Them;*
- j) *Which is the Holly Beginning of the Monastic Life and what Is Done Well Like;*
- k) *About the Countenance of the Monastic Clothes;*
- l) *Which the Forms of the Holy Churchly Beginning Are;*
- m) *The Settlements with Godlike Countenance;*
- n) *About Obedience.*

These ones are, mostly, a summary of the heavenly and churchly hierarchy of Dionysus Areopagite, framing in the churchly hierarchy the monastic steps too. That's why we aren't going to translate them in *The Romanian Philokalia*. But this writing shows the will of Saint Gregory Sinaite of framing the persona prayer of the heart in the Church's life.

4) In these richer manuscripts, two of the seven heads comprised in *The Greek Philokalia* – G.P. under the title as *Other Heads*, are comprised, after the 14 titles from above (from the letter *a* up to *o*); for the temptations during sleeping, for what one appropriately can take alms like¹⁴⁶. The separation of these two heads from the other five, and because their content seems not to be so related to the other five heads, and they insist too much on physiological details about leaks, and because of that we reckon that they do not frame so well within the writing of Gregory Sinaite, all these reasons urged us not to place them into *The Romanian Philokalia*, also because we doubt about the fact that they belong to Gregory Sinaite's work.

5) *The Greek Philokalia* repeats in the volume V (pp. 90-103), in Neo-Greek, the writing *About What One Must Appropriately Sit Like at Prayer*, from the volume IV, pp. 78-88. This repetition is done at different places also in the Second Edition (volume II) from *The Greek Philokalia*. But the Neo-Greek text adds to each edition a small paragraph which we are going to add it to our translation too¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁶ For instance, in the manuscript of Ghenoiu, at the pp. 133-136, and not starting at p. 84.

¹⁴⁷ In some Romanian manuscripts, as for instance in Manuscript no. 39 from Neamț Monastery, the whole this Neo-Greek text is translated under the title: *Heads for Carelessness (about Hesychia-Quietude)*. It seems that this text, together with other texts, it is another older translation, because of using some Romanian older words: for instance, instead of quietude, it

6. The richer Romanian manuscripts also give a dialogue between Gregory Sinaite and Maximos Cavsovolite. This dialogue is given, in Neo-Greek, in *The Greek Philokalia* too.

We do not know that, besides these texts from *The Greek Philokalia* and besides the additional texts given in the Romanian manuscripts, there are other texts having Gregory Sinaite as author.

The fact that, to the translation from Greek to Romanian, of the work of Gregory Sinaite, in the XVIII Century, the *Foreword* was composed by Basil from Poiana Mărului, who died in the year 1767, and who was already famous for his spiritual life in the year 1749, when he was summoned at Bucharest in order to be seen and consulted by the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem¹⁴⁸, it shows that this translation, as also that from Philotheos Sinaite, they were done by Romanian monks way before Paisius Velichkovsky settled down in Moldavia in the year 1768. This is for the *Foreword* to these writings had to be done way before. Basil from Poiana Mărului had to written these fore-speeches before the year 1749, when he was already famous. Besides, he came to Moldavia around the year 1712. This was for he stayed at Dălhăuți Monastery for 20 years, and in the year 1733 he has enough authority to found the Poiana Mărului Monastery and he became its starets for life. And the fact that in the *Foreword* to Gregory Sinaite, Basil quoted in Romanian, from so many spiritual fathers from the past (Saints Hesychius, Peter Damascene, Kallistos and Ignatius, Simeon of Thessaloniki, John Climacus, Dorotheos) meant that all of these had already been translated in Romanian before the time he lived. So, the translation work under Paisius was, mostly, rather a “revision” of the old texts which became, as we have seen in the footnote no. 125, because of some outdated words, difficult to be understood¹⁴⁹.

uses the word carelessness, or *mulcomi* (this is a word from the old Romanian language (E. I. t.'s n.)) to appease (the one who gets quietude, there is worded like: the one who appeases himself), instead of deceit, *împrelestare* (this being a Slavic origin words, meaning: to delude, to cast a spell).

¹⁴⁸ Fr. Horian Constantinescu and Fr. Gabriel Cocora, „Poiana Mărului” (“The Apple’s Meadow”), in: *Glasul Bisericii (The Voice of the Church)*, 1964, no. 5-6, pp. 473, 475.

¹⁴⁹ Deacon P. I. David, *Cuviosul Paisie cel Mare (Velichkovsky), un desăvârșit monah român (Pious Paisius the Great, a Consummate Romanian Monk)*, Bucharest, 1975, p. 12. The

Paisius would have come across, at his turn, with these writings, during his first staying in Moldavia (1742-1749) and these translations and the practice of the clean prayer, by Basil from Poiana Mărului, would have urged him to go not only to the Holy Mountain, but also to occupy himself, there, with the writings of Gregory Sinaite and with putting in practice the prayer recommended by these writings. That's why, in Athos, the Moldavian monk Atanasie accused Paisius of: "changing the rule of the Prayer to Jesus, because of trusting too much the Greek manuscripts, and because he translates wrongly the teaching of Saint Gregory Sinaite about the prayer of the mind..."¹⁵⁰. So, the Moldavia Atanasie knew the Romanian older translations of the writings of Gregory Sinaite, and he reckoned as wrong the trust Paisius had in the Greek manuscripts. So, one can say that Basil from Poiana Mărului, being pressed, in Ukraine, by Uniatism, he came to Moldavia for he knew that he was to find there the Eastern spiritual writings translated from Greek, and the possibility to live according to the provisions of those writings, and Paisius came from the same reason, but he might also have been attracted by the fame, or by the calling of Basil and of the practice of the prayer of the mind, that existed in Moldavia. We are mentioning here also the fact that, according to some authors, Basil from Poiana Mărului, it was even his relative (H. Constantinescu and Fr. Gabriel Cocora, *quoted work*, p. 472).

Regarding the content of the writings of Gregory Sinaite, they show their authors not only as an empiricist practician of "a method of the prayer of the heart", but also as a great exegete of that method. Saint Gregory embraced with his thinking a very various range of themes of spiritual life, from the highest peaks of the thinking at God and from the mind's encounter with the Holy Trinity in the innermost altar of the human being, and to the most concrete details of the body's life. He assimilated his thinking upon the spiritual life from Makarios, Diadochus, Mark the Ascetic, Saint Simeon the New Theologian, and Saint Maximos the Confessor. He makes a synthesis of their theology. And he didn't stop there, but, by applying all of that to prayer and to the effort of cleaning of passions, he

arguments brought by author for the Romanian origin of Paisius are very serious and worthy of being taken in account.

¹⁵⁰ Romanian manuscript 5693. At Deacon P. I. David, *quoted work*, p. 11.

proved himself as being maybe the subtlest analyst of the psychic and spiritual movements of the human being.

He brought obvious clarifications upon the spiritual warmth that accompanies the clean prayer, and upon that one that is deceiver and sinful; he proved to be a merciless adversary to the hallucinations and to all phenomena of spiritual deceit, and an upholder of the subtlest and most authentic experiencing of the presence of God. He understood the need for alternating the singing with the heart's prayer, at the beginners. He went to the tiniest details in explaining the good and the bad connections between soul and body. The Palamas' treatises about prayer (Treaty II from Triads I and II, against Barlaam) are strongly influenced by the teaching of Saint Gregory Sinaite. Even if Palamas hadn't personal contact with Gregory Sinaite, and even if Palamas didn't know his writings, he could, at least, find out his ideas at least from his disciples. In the same time, Gregory Sinaite manifested a spirituality of great equilibrium, a humble refraining from the too daring theological formulations. He asked for reckoning the light seen during prayer as beyond any materialness; he didn't ask for squeezing the nostrils while breathing, but only for closing the mouth, in order the mouth not to remain open and to distract the ones who prays. He didn't tie, too tightly, the mind's prayer to a technical method. He didn't know, explicitly, either the teaching about the difference between the being and the uncreated energies of God, a teaching developed by Saint Gregory Palamas who was forced to do that by the need for defending the charismatic experiences lived by hesychasts, in order those experiences not to be included in the energies caused by the order of the creatures.

If Saint Gregory Palamas was the vulture that touched the dizzying heights of the teaching about God and about the deification of the man, Saint Gregory Sinaite was the master of the subtle analyzes of the inward movements of the human being.

Of the One Amongst Saints Our Father Gregory Sinaite

*Very Useful Heads in Acrostic, of which
Acrostic is this: Diverse Words about
Commandments, Dogmas, Menaces and
Promises, and even about Thoughts,
Passions, and Virtues; and then about
Appeasement and Prayer.*

1. It is impossible somebody to be, or to become, according to the nature, rational, without cleanness and without incorruptibility. This is because the first one has been abducted by the irrational habit, and the second one (the incorruptibility) had been taken over by the body's state of corruptibility.

2. Rational according to the nature have proven to be only the saints, through cleanness¹⁵¹. This is because no one amongst the wise into rationality's aspects had clean rationality, given the fact that they had broken their rationality, at the beginning, through thoughts. This is because the earthly and much-speaking ghost of this world, by getting the rationalities closer to the more knowers, and by getting the thoughts closer to the more untaught ones, it causes their together-dwelling, and so it deprives the people of the hypostasized wisdom and of seeing it, or of the undivided and unitary knowledge¹⁵².

¹⁵¹ The Holy Fathers do not separate the ethical plan from the moral plan. Fully rational is only the saint. He regained his sight and his judgment as untroubled by passions, namely that rationality according to nature, that one had by man through creation, through the cleaning of passions. As long as there still is within man an impulse towards sin, that man isn't either fully clean or fully rational. The nature itself hasn't regained its integrity, its rectitude, and its profoundness on rational plan, because of not regaining its natural transparenence to the godlike infiniteness.

¹⁵² The whole knowledge became dispersed after the falling. The scholars know only separate rationalities of the things, while the untaught ones have all sorts of thought mixed up with passions. This causes a co-habiting of ideas, often full of contradictions, but not a unitary whole. Thus, it cannot be known the wisdom as Supreme Person, from Whom start all the rationalities and in Whom are unified all, and in union with Whom are everybody united. This theme is taken from Saint Maximos the Confessor (*Ambigua*). Saint Gregory Sinaite proved to be somebody introduced in the highest thinking of the Holy Fathers.

3. Reckon the feeling of the grace as knowledge characteristic to the truth. We must call the other knowledge as interpretations of meanings and proofs of things¹⁵³.

4. All of them who do not succeed in achieving the grace, they suffer that because of their faithlessness and carelessness; and again, all of them who find the grace, they find it by faith and zeal. This is for by these they always go forwards; and by the opposite ones they totally regress.

5. Being dead and insensitive, it is the same to being blind with the mind and not seeing spiritually. This is for one has been deprived of the living and working power; and he who doesn't see, he has been deprived of the godlike light that makes him seeing and praying¹⁵⁴.

6. Few people receive both their power and wisdom from God. This is because the first one shares the godlike goods, and the second one shares the capacity of expressing the godlike goods. And receiving by impartation and the giving as gift, further on, it is a truly godlike thing, one above the man.

7. The thoughtless heart, worked by the Ghost, it is the true altar even before the future life. This is for everything is done and uttered there, spiritually. And he who hasn't achieved this even from here, he is a stone for other virtues, a stone good for building the godlike church, but he isn't a church and he isn't a priest of the Ghost.

8. The man has been created incorruptible, without stum, and so he will resurrect too. But the man hasn't been created changeable, neither unchangeable, for he has in his will the power to change himself or not. This is for the will doesn't make somebody to remain totally unchanged in his nature. For this is the crown of the future unchangeable deification¹⁵⁵.

¹⁵³ The "feeling of the grace" it means living the benevolence and the power of the Supreme Person. Only this places us in connection with the fundamental and total reality. The other knowledge is the expression of the understanding of some truths which are fragmented and inessential to the eternal existence. The expression "the feeling of the grace" can be found at Diadochus (head no. 31; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 346), but it was developed by Saint Simeon the New Theologian.

¹⁵⁴ We have here a definition of the godlike light, one that has nothing to deem it unacceptable or misunderstood. The godlike light is that one that makes us understanding, and getting along with one another. In this way are scattered the doubts of them who think that the godlike light is conceived as a material light.

¹⁵⁵ The man has been made incorruptible, but not unchangeable, thought the change doesn't take place involuntarily. One will achieve the unchangeability in the future life, together with achieving the incorruptibility. If the man had guarded his unchangeability into good, he would

9. The corruptibility is the becoming of the body; and eating, and rejecting the remnants, and getting fat, and sleeping, are natural features of the beasts and of the animals. By that, resembling ourselves to the beasts, because of our disobedience (Ps. 48: 12¹⁵⁶), we have fallen from the goods given us by God¹⁵⁷. We have become beastly from rational, and from godlike we have become as the beasts are.

10. The Paradise is of two kinds sensitive and intelligible (known with the senses and with the thinking), or the Paradise from Eden and the Paradise of the grace¹⁵⁸. The Paradis from Eden is a very high place, so that it reaches up to the third sky, as say they who told about it, and it is planted by God with all kinds of well scenting greenery. That Paradise isn't either totally incorruptible or totally corruptible, but it is placed in the middle, between corruptibility and incorruptibility, so that it is always full of fruits and adorned with flowers, and having, ceaselessly, raw and ripen fruits. This is for the rotten trees and the fruits fallen on the ground, they become well-scenting soil, and they do not spread smell of rottenness and the world's plants do. And this happens out of the great richness and holiness of the grace, that always overwhelms there. That's why the oceanic river that crosses through that Paradise, and that was commanded to always chill down this place, by coming out of this Paradise, and by being divided in four branches, by descending, it brings and gives to Hindu¹⁵⁹ and to Ethiopians the soil and the fallen leaves. Then uniting, the Pison and the Gihon (Gen. 2: 8) flow together, ceaselessly, over their plains, until they are divided, again, one of then cooling down the Country of Libya, and another the Country of Egypt.

have been guarded his incorruptibility. The unchangeability as result of the man's will, united with the will of God, and united with the incorruptibility, it means the coronation of the nature through deification.

¹⁵⁶ In KJB we have: Ps. 49: 12: "Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish."; in ROB we have: Ps. 48: 12: "And the man, being in honor, he didn't understand; he joined the mindless beasts and resembled himself to them." (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁵⁷ Characteristic to our nature are those features given us by God, out of His own features, and we cannot have those features except in communion with Him.

¹⁵⁸ The focusing on the original incorruptibility of the nature and the idea of "the feeling of the grace" are taken from Saint Simeon, and the idea of the two Paradises is taken from Nicetas Stethatos.

¹⁵⁹ I have translated the word ινδιχοί for Hindu. But Saint Gregory might have thought at Indians too, or at the yellow race out of which the Indians from America originated, or even at the black people from Africa.

11. So, I am saying that the creation wasn't made flowing and corruptible since the beginning. But it was later broken, and it obeyed the emptiness, namely to the man, according to the scripture (Rom. 8: 25). And not willingly, but unwillingly, for him who submitted it, for the hope of Adam's – who was corrupted – renewal. By renewing Adam and by sanctifying him, even though Adam bears a corruptible body for the temporary life, He has renewed the creation too, even though He hasn't delivered the creation, yet, from corruptibility. And the deliverance of the creation from corruptibility, some people say that it is the creation's changing towards better, while other people say that it means the total transformation of the things submitted to the senses. For the habit of the Scripture is to make a simple affirmation, without much spying, about the things which are difficult to understand.

12. They who receive the grace as a conception and as a conceiving through the Ghost, they reject the godlike seed either by fallings or by being deprived of God because they join the enemy who hides within them. The rejection of the grace is done by working the passions; and the total lack of the grace it happens by committing the sins. This is because the soul that loves the passion and the sin, and that rejects and loses the grace and it is deprived of God, that soul becomes dwelling place to the passions, not to say of the devils, now and in the age to come.

13. Nothing makes the wrath so serene and gentle, as it does it the manhood and the mercy. The first one breaks them who wage war to it from outside, while the second one breaks them who wage war to it from inside.

14. Many people, by working the commandments, they reckon themselves as advancing towards the city, but because of not reaching in there, they remain outside the city. This is because of deviating, without noticing it, from the imperial ways, towards the evil things neighboring the virtues, they advance unwisely. This is because the commandments do not allow any lack, neither any crossing over the measure, but the commandments only search for fulfilling the pleasant to God purpose and they search only for the godlike will. Thus, vain will be the toil if the ways of God aren't made straight, according to the Scripture (Isa. 40: 3). This is for, in anything, it is aimed the target of the work.

15. Search for the Lord on your way, namely through commandments, within your heart. This is for, when you hear

John shouting out and commanding everyone to prepare themselves and to straighten the ways, you must understand that that is about commandments, about hearts, and about deeds. This is because of being impossible to make straight the way of the commandment and the innocent deed, if there isn't righteousness within heart.

16. When you hear the Scripture speaking about staff and crutch (Ps. 22: 4¹⁶⁰), you reckon that is the prophetic meaning they are the judgment and the Providence; and in the moral meaning, they are the chanting of psalms and the prayer. This is because, being us judged by God with the staff of the punishing, we are advised towards turning back (1 Cor. 11: 32). And us, by punishing them who uprising against us, with the staff of the manly chanting of psalms, we lean against prayer. So, by having us the staff and the crutch in the hand of the mind's work, let's not cease punishing and being punished, until we will totally reach under Providence, by running away from the present and from the future judgments.

17. It is characteristic to commandments, to always reckon as superior to everything, that comprising commandment that says: "You shall always remember your Lord God". This is for, what they have been lost through, by the same they can be guarded too. This is because the forgetfulness has lost the godlike remembrance that was at the beginning, by darkening the minds, and so it has shown the man as empty of any good thing.

18. They who live in asceticism, they come again to the old worthiness by fulfilling two commandments: by obedience and by fasting. This is because through the things opposite to these two, all sins entered the nation of the mortals. They who guard the commandments through obedience, they turn more quickly to God, and they who guard them through fasting and prayer, they turn to God a little slower. The obedience is more appropriate to the beginners, and the fasting to the ones who are in the middle of advancing, and more knower and more manly. This is for, by guarding the obedience to God, through commandments, in an undiminished manner, it is characteristic

¹⁶⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 23: 4: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."; in ROB we have: Ps. 22: 4-5: "For even if I walk in the middle of the death, I won't fear evil things; for You are with me. // Your staff and Your rod, these ones comforted me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

to a very few people, because of being difficult even to the manliest.

19. That law that works and speaks within heart, it is the law of the Ghost of the life, according to the Apostle, as that law worked within body it is of the letter. The first one delivers the mind from the law of the sin and of the death (Rom. 8: 2), while the second one, unnoticeably, it makes the man to become Pharisee, who both fulfills the bodily law and works the commandments in order him to be seen (Mt. 23: 5)¹⁶¹.

20. The harmonious and well tied joining of all virtues (Eph. 4: 10) into Ghost, I say that it makes the man consummate. Or, if he is still on his way, he who is still non-consummate. And I reckon the commandments as body, while the virtues as habits of some good features, I reckon them as bones. At last, I reckon the grace as soul that gives life and it moves and it works the deeds of the commandments as they would be a body. This is because, the carelessness, or the zeal towards the ages of Christ, they show somebody either as a little child or as consummate, now and in the future ages.

21. He who wants to grow up his body of the virtues, let him strive for desiring the rational and unspoiled milk of the grace of mother. This is for, from there nourishes himself everybody who searches for the growth into Christ and who wants to increase himself into Christ. The wisdom gives from its

¹⁶¹ The commandments are the way which we reach Christ on. But, the core of the commandments is Christ Himself. This is for the commandments make us ever like Him. Christ is the consummately fulfilled commandment. But the commandments can be fulfilled also only with the body. If that is the case, the commandments will be a law of the body, one that transforms the man into a Pharisee. The commandment must be fulfilled with the whole heart – then they will become a law of the Ghost. This is for, through the heart, there works the Ghost. That's why the commandments will be the true way towards Christ, only when they are united with the heart.

That happens when we have always the remembrance of God within our heart. The opposite of the commandments is, therefore, the forgetfulness. The remembrance of God is the spring of the obedience, which the commandments are fulfilled through.

But we are helped to work the commandments, by the thought at the judgment of God, or at the punishments coming to us because of not fulfilling the commandments. And even the punishments of the judgment of God as applied to us when we do not fulfill some commandments that would have been helpful to us. Helped by the judgment of God, or by the thoughts at punishments, or even by punishments, we reach, by fulfilling the commandments, under the full comforting of the Providence. But the staff of the punishing would be difficult to endure, if we didn't lean ourselves on the crutch of the prayer, as held in the hand of the mind's work. Without this one, we couldn't use the staff either in the sense of punishing our passions, or of the enemies who instill those passions to us.

chest, as milk for growing, the warmth; and to them who are consummate, as nourishing honey, the joy towards cleanness¹⁶². “For honey and milk will be under your tongue” (Song of Songs 4: 11). Solomon called as milk the nourishing and growing powers; and he called as honey, the cleaning power of the Ghost¹⁶³. And the great Apostle, when showing the differences between works, he says: “As on some little children I have been nourishing you with milk and not with hard food” (1 Cor. 3: 2).

22. He who searches for the meanings of the commandments without commandments, by wanting to find them through learning and reading, he is like the one imagining that the shadow is the truth. This is for the meanings of the truths are given, as gifts, to them who are imparted with the truth¹⁶⁴. And they who aren't imparted with the truth, or who aren't introduced in the truth, they find out the things of the

¹⁶² The grace nourishes, as a milk, him who – while advancing in fulfilling the commandments – makes grow up within himself the body of the virtues. This is for the grace upholds, in the first place, the prayer, without which the man cannot fulfill steadfastly the commandments, neither can he grow up into virtues, as in a harmonious organism. So, the grace isn't something limited or static, but it is the flux of the love from God, a love that strengthens us in growing in the ever likeness to God. The grace isn't but the endless love of Christ. The image: “the body of the virtues”, it was used too, very much, by Saint Simeon the New Theologian. The virtues do not stay separated from one another, but they join up amongst themselves, and they are soaked up within our being, and through virtues, out being itself, it will become as a harmonious body of the virtues, namely a being unitarily structured through virtues, as a multilateral urge of love towards God, and towards people. When this body of the virtues has become vigorous, it won't any longer be nourished with the grace as with some milk, but the grace has become honey that sweetens through love both their subject and them whom their works are spread upon.

¹⁶³ But Saint Gregory specifies that this milk of the grace, that becomes as honey to the consummate ones, it comes to us from the bosom of the wisdom itself, and that is the Person of the Word: Christ. Only the Person of Christ can nourish us, through His love, from itself His bosom. Through this grace He doesn't only warm us up and sweeten us, but he also cleans us up. This is for the love cleans up of egotism and of all the sins born out of egotism. That's why the milk and the honey of the grace are, in the same time, the cleaning power of the Ghost. This is for through grace we have become one spirit with Christ.

¹⁶⁴ They who search for the meanings of all the commandments, without fulfilling the commandments, those ones do not reckon the commandments as actual commandments of the godlike Subject Who has the power to command and commanding is His own. That's why such people do not place themselves in connection with Him Who properly is the Truth; this is because in such a case the commandments do not express Him who give in commandments His will and His power, in order the commandments to build, in truth, those who fulfill the commandments. They remain to some impersonal meanings, which do not give them any power towards moral growth and towards salvation. One must understand the commandments as the things too, as signs of the love of the personal God and as appeals to our love, in order us to become like Him and by that, us to be united with Him.

insane wisdom (1 Cor. 1: 10). These ones were called by the Apostle as “souly”, as ones “who do not have Ghost” (Jude 19), even if they boast themselves with the truth.

23. Like the eye of the body looks at a letter and out of that letter the eye receives the meanings of the things submitted to the senses, likewise the mind, when it is cleaned and turned back to the old worthiness, the mind looks at God and it receives from Him the godlike meanings. Instead of a book, the mind has the Ghost, and instead of a pen, the mind has the understanding and the tongue – for “my tongue, he says, it is a pen” (Ps. 44: 2¹⁶⁵) – and instead of ink it has the light. So, by deepening its understanding into light and by becoming luminous light, the mind writes into Ghost, the words, into the clean hearts of the listeners. Then the mind understands how “the believers will be taught by God” (Isa. 54: 13; Jn. 4: 45) and how God teaches the man into Ghost (Ps. 93: 10¹⁶⁶), according to the prophecy¹⁶⁷.

24. Reckon as an unmediated law of the commandments, that faith that works within heart. This is for out of that faith is springs out all commandments, and it produces the illumination of the souls. And the fruits of such souls, out of the true and working faith, they are: the restraint and the love, and their end is the humbleness given, as a gift, by God, and the humbleness is the beginning and the strengthening of the love¹⁶⁸.

¹⁶⁵ In KJB we have: Ps. 45: 1: “MY heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 44: 1-2: “My heart answered a good word; I will utter my song to the Emperor. // My tongue is writer reed that writes skillfully”. (E. l. t.’s n.)

¹⁶⁶ In KJB we have: Ps. 94: 10: “He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?”; in ROB we have: “He Who punishes the nations, won’t He rebuke too? He who teaches the man the knowledge,” (E. l. t.’s n.)

¹⁶⁷ The true knowledge of God is the knowledge by experience, and not by only reading books. In this case the understanding deepens in itself His light, and it becomes a light as well. Such a spiritually advanced person, while speaking to others, God Himself speaks through that person and God Himself teaches others through such a person. The word is full of the power of God and of the surety of him who has seen God and who feels God’s power.

¹⁶⁸ Saint Gregory reckons the commandments and the faith so close as even being identical to one another. The commandment, or better said the power for understanding and fulfilling the commandment, it springs out of that faith that works, in an unmediated manner, within heart. The faith works as a law, while having in it as directive power the law of the commandments, out of the right knowledge about God and out of some initial union with God. That’s why, the faith imposes itself as a commandment, or as a sum of commandments. In this understanding of the faith, the Protestant separation between faith and deeds it appears to be totally wrong. But a faith that imposes through itself as a law, or as a commandment, it is imposed as such for it is shown as a luminous light within souls, as a light of God and of the mode we must

25. The true knowledge of the seen and of the unseen realities, it is the non-liar glory of the existing realities. The knowledge of the seen realities, it is the glory of the sensitive realities, and the knowledge of the unseen realities, it is the glory of the intelligible, rational, understanding, and godlike realities.

26. We define the right-faith as seeing and knowing, into cleanness, the two dogmas of the faith, namely the Trinity and the twoness: we must look at the Trinity and we must know the Trinity in an unmixed and uncut way, in unity, and we must know the twoness of the natures of Christ, in one hypostasis, that meaning to confess and to know One Son both before and after embodiment, but after embodiment, extolled in an unmixed mode in two natures and in two wills, godlike and human.

27. We must piously confess the non-birth, the birth, and the proceeding, as three features of the motionless and unchanged Persons of the Holy Trinity: The Father as unborn and without beginning, the Son as born and together without beginning, and the Holy Ghost as proceeded from the Father and given through the Son (as Damascene says) and together eternal.

28. Only that faith out of grace, working through commandments into the Ghost, will be enough for salvation, if we guard it and if we do not choose that faith that is dead and unworking, instead of that one that is alive and working into Christ. This is for the believer must receive that image and that life into Christ, which are worked by faith. The believers have learnt that the nescience brings a dead and insensitive faith, a faith that is solely words, but that is not that faith out of grace.

29. The Trinity is simple unit, for it is without quality and uncomposed. But it is Trinity in unity. This is for God Who is threefold in Hypostases, he has as totally unmixed the perichoresis (Their interpenetration) of the Three Persons.

30. God is known and God is said, in all aspects, as threefold. This is for God is borderless. God is the upholder and the care taker of all realities, through the Son and into the Holy Ghost. No one amongst These Three Ones is said, or reckoned, or called, without or outside the Others.

31. There are, within man: mind, word, and ghost, and neither the mind is without word, not the word is without ghost; and these ones are one within another and within themselves.

behave ourselves, in order us to become like Him, by fulfilling His will, so that we will become united in will with Him.

This is for the mind speaks by word and the word is shown by ghost. By that, the man bears an overshadowed image of the non-called and archetypal Trinity. The word “in the image” it shows that too¹⁶⁹.

32. The Father is the Mind, the Son is the Word, and the Holy Ghost really is the Ghost, as the God bearer Fathers teach us, by using the resemblance, and by making steadfast the dogma about the Holy Trinity, above nature and science, about God in three Hypostases, letting us the true faith and an anchor of hope. This is for, knowing the One God is, according to the Scripture, the root of the immortality (Proverbs 15: 2); and to see and to know the mastery of the unity in three Hypostases, it is the whole righteousness; or so we must understand the word from the Gospel: “And the eternal life is this: to know You, the One True God: in three Hypostases and “Him Who You have sent, Jesus Christ” (Jn. 17: 3), in two natures and wills.

33. The torments are diverse, as the rewards are diverse too. And the torments are hell, according to the Scripture that says: “In darkened and non-lighted land, in the land of the eternal darkness: (Job 10: 21-22), there where the sinners dwell, both before judgment and after their damnation. This is because: “Let the sinners turn back to hell” (Ps. 9: 17¹⁷⁰) and “The death will graze them” (Ps. 48: 15¹⁷¹), what else could be if not the last decision and the eternal damnation?

34. The fire, the darkness, the worm, and the hell are the usual addiction to the bodily pleasure, the general nescience of the darkness, the fiery tickling of the passion from within all, the trembling and the stinky storm of the sin. These ones are worked, ever since from here, within the sinners’ souls, as an earnest and as the first fruits of the torments and they are shown there as a habit.

¹⁶⁹ The expression “in the image” that characterizes the human being, it shows too the human being’s likeness with the Holy Trinity. But in this is shown both the fact that the human being isn’t an individual totally separated by other people, and the fact that the human being has mind, and word, and ghost, non-separated from one another, but working and being shown one through another, and only that human being is whole who has all three of these.

¹⁷⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 9: 17: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 9: 17: “Let the sinners turn back in hell; all the nations which forget about God.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

¹⁷¹ In KJB we have: Ps. 49: 14: “Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; in ROB we have: Ps. 48: 14: “As some sheep in hell they are placed, the death will graze them.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

35. The habits of the passions are the earnestests of the torment, like the works of the virtues are the earnestests of the Kingdom. We must reckon and call the commandments as works; and we must reckon and call the virtues as habits, as also the sins continuously done are called too as habits.

36. The rewards are according to the deeds, even if, to many people, it doesn't seem to be like that. This is for the godlike justice gives to some people, as gift, the eternal life, and to others the eternal damnation. But both kinds of people, by crossing the time from here, well or bad, they will receive their rewards according to their deeds. And the size and the kind of the rewards their will enjoy are going to be according to the habituation and the work of the passions or of the virtues.

37. The souls addicted to pleasure are swamps of fire (Apoc. 19: 20), where the stench of the passions, stinking like a mud, it nourishes like on a sleepless worm of the fornication, the body's debauchery, and as on some snakes, frogs, and leeches or the corrupted lusts, the thoughts and the corrupted and spitting of poison devils. This state has taken, since here, the earnest of the torments from there.

38. Like the first fruits of the eternal torments are hidden within the sinners' souls, likewise the earnestests of the goods work through the Ghost and they are given, as gifts, within the hearts of the righteous. This is for the Kingdom of Heavens is the virtuous living, like the torments are the habituation to the passions.

39. That night that comes (Jn. 9: 4) is, according to the Lords' word, the total petrification of the future darkness, or in other way the antichrist, that is called too as night and darkness; or again, in a moral sense, it is the continuous carelessness that, as a moonless night, it sinks the soul into the sleep of the numbness. This is because, like the night makes all people sleep and it is the image of the death, by the numbness that it brings, likewise the future darkness will make the sinners death and numbed by the pains' dizziness.

40. The judgment of the present world (Jn. 3: 19), according to the Gospel's word, it consists of the faithlessness of the impious, according to the word: "And he who doesn't believe, he has been already condemned" (Jn. 3: 18); also, it consist of the troubles brought by Providence for restraining or turning back; and then it consists of the influence of the good and bad plans, being helped to cross into deed, according to the word:

“The sinners have estranged themselves from the womb of their mother” (Ps. 57: 3¹⁷²). The right judgment of God is shown, therefore, in order to straighten through punishments and according to the deeds, by punishing some of the people while having mercy on others, by giving to some of the people, as rewards, the crowns, while others are given the torments. Amongst the punished ones, the first ones are the totally faithless ones; the second ones who are punished, are they who are believers, but without zeal, and that’s why they are punished mercifully (with love for people¹⁷³). And they who have become consummate, either in virtues or in sins, they will be rewarded accordingly.

41. If the nature isn’t guarded undefiled, through the Ghost, or if the nature isn’t cleaned up as it is due, the nature won’t be able to make a body and a ghost with Christ, now and in the future harmony. This is for a patch from an old cloth of the passions cannot be sawn, by the comprising and unifier power of the Ghost, on the coat of the grace for making whole.

42. He who has received as a gift, but he also guarded the renewal of the Ghost, he will have a corresponding honor to the composing (of the body) of Christ, then experiencing that deification above nature, in an untold manner. This is for there won’t be anyone from Christ, or limb of Christ, if he doesn’t make himself, since here, partaker to the Ghost, being composed in the image of the truth and of the knowledge, as the Apostle says (Rom. 2: 20).

43. The Kingdom of Heavens is like a tent made by God, as that tent shown to Moses, a tent having two chambers in the future age. The first chamber will be entered by all of them who are priests of the grace; the second chamber, the intelligible one, it will be entered only by them who have been liturgizing, since here, to the Holy trinity, as some hierarchs into consummation, in the darkness of the knowledge about God. They have as chieftain in their ministration, and they have Jesus as Prime Hierarch before the Trinity, in the tent He founded. These ones,

¹⁷² In KJB we have: Ps. 58: 4: “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”; in Rob we have: Ps. 57: 3: “The sinners have estranged themselves since they birth, they have lost their way since they were in the womb, they have been uttering lies.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

¹⁷³ We have preferred to translate *punished with love for people* (meaning the punishment is gentle...) for *punished mercifully*, in order not to create an *oxymoron* (for love loves not punishes). (E. l. t.’s n.)

by entering there, they will be lighted more limpidly by the rays of His light¹⁷⁴.

44. The many dwelling places which our Savior spoke about (Jn. 14: 2), are the diverse stages and advancements of the condition from there. The Kingdom is one, but it has many differences within, because some people are heavenly while others are earthly, according to their virtue, to their knowledge, and to the extent of their deification. "This is for other is the glory of the sun, another of the moon, and other of the stars; and star from star differs into glory" (! Cor. 15: 41), as the Apostle says, on the godlike vault.

45. He who has cleaned up his mind through tears, and who has resurrected his soul even from here, through the Ghost, he reaches to be, for a short while, together-living with the angels and bodiless as one who is not submitted to the corruption. And he makes his body, through rationality, as a luminous and burning image of the godlike beauty, out of clay creation; and he makes his body as it was according to its nature, for the incorruptibility of the bodies means the removal of the stumps and of the thickness¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷⁴ The first part of the tent of the future age, it will be entered by all of them who have been priests of the grace, namely they served the grace by fructifying the grace's power in their life. But the second chamber, the innermost part of the tent, the Holy of the Holies, it will be entered only by them who have been serving, since here, as some hierarchs, by the fact that they have entered the darkness of that knowledge above knowledge, about God, as Moses did on Mount Sinai, so that he reached before God in Trinity Who is totally undefined in the abyss of His richness, but, in the same time, he reached the most intense feeling of God's mysterious and loving presence, lived as such by the fact that is a love amongst the Three All-Consummate Persons and, by that, next to the supreme hearth of the love. Namely, they have entered there where entered the first Hierarchy and Chieftain of any ministration brought to God, namely Jesus Christ as man Who, as God, He receives the ministration as One of Trinity. United with Christ, lighted by the luminous infiniteness of His godhead, by the all-loving light of the Trinity, they are lighted more than them who entered the first room. This knowledge in the darkness that is above knowledge, it consummates them who reach there, for it is knowledge through the most intense experiencing of God as Supreme Communion of Persons, namely as source that irradiates that love within them, and so making them too loving at maximum. It is felt here the influence of Dionysus the Areopagite. These ones are, through their life of maximum intensity of the feeling of God, to the opposite extreme of them who have reached the supreme numbness and insensitiveness in hell, a numbness and insensitiveness caused by the passions which tire them down and exhaust them, eventually, of any stimulative power.

¹⁷⁵ The rationality can be here also the Logos or the Word of God Who, by addressing Himself to the believer as Person and as Word, as Person Who claims the person He addresses by His penetrating Word, He elevates that person to the state of supreme responsibility, in the light of the communion that illuminates, at maximum, both of them: that person and God. But

46. The incorruptibility's body is the earthly body except the juices and the thickness, a body that has been transformed, in an untold manner, out of souly body, in a spiritual body, so that that body is both earthly and heavenly, through the thinness of the godlike countenance. This is for, as it was created from the beginning, likewise the body will resurrect too, in order to be in the image of the Son of Man, and being imparted, entirely, with godhead¹⁷⁶.

47. The earth of the gentle ones, it is the Kingdom of Heavens, or the theandric habituation to the Son¹⁷⁷ Who we have entered at, or we are going to enter, by receiving the birth of the adoption by grace, and the renewal through resurrection. Or, again, the holy land is the deified nature¹⁷⁸, or maybe this earth too, it is cleaned up according to the worthiness of the people living on earth. Or, according to another meaning, the earth inherited by them who truly are saints, it is the non-

it also can be the human rationality elevated by the godlike Rationality or Word. Such a responsible and knower rationality of the relation of the man with God, and open to the understanding of the whole reality in the endless depth of God, it fills up the man with light, and that light irradiates also on that man's face, and it makes the man a transparent "statue", as an immaterial membrane, out of a statue of opaque clay. This transparency makes the man incorruptible, for that means also a removal of the juices from within him and of the fat and of the thickness, which are submitted, at maximum, to the decomposition processes. This conception stays at the basis of the thin, transparent, and luminous images from the Byzantine icons. How far from this spiritualizing conception about the man, it is that manifested in the round bodies painted in the paintings of the Occident, painting born out of the painters' interest in anatomy, rather than being they interested in expressing the state of resurrection, a condition anticipated even from here by saints. The fasting receives as well, its full signification in such a conception.

¹⁷⁶ It is stressed upon, again, the thinness as note of the deified body that has been reestablished in his natural beauty, a beauty that is not contrary to a certain vigor, a thinness and vigor which the incorruptibility is involves in. The body that is in this state, it has reached pneumatic, out of souly, for the Ghost overwhelms in that body the bodily feelings of the soul. But that body that has become heavenly, it still remains earthly too, because of not rejecting the matter, regardless how transparent it would become through the godlike Ghost. That body that has become like that, it reaches the stature appointed to the man by God, as the embodied Son of God has it after resurrection, and that's why He is called as the Son of Man by excellence.

¹⁷⁷ The theandric accustoming to the Son is the full harmony of the human will with the godlike will into Christ, so that Christ pursues a sole goal, both as God and as man, on a sole line. He is the solid ground on which, by standing us steadfastly, we have the happiness of the full communion with God; we have our human work crossed through by the godlike work.

¹⁷⁸ The deified nature is the holy land, for our body made out of earth it has become holy through deification. Through the deified heavenly body, the earth becomes deified, a membrane that irradiates the whole luminous gold and all the spiritual dimensions and rationalities of the infinite, as through our thinned body too.

stormy and godlike serenity of the above-mind peace, which the nation of the righteous ones will dwell into, and where nothing from the created realities will bother them anymore, through their noise and temptation.

48. The Promised Land is the dispassion. Out of it, it springs the gladness of the Ghost, like milk and honey.

49. In the future age, the saints will talk to one another, in a mysterious way, the inward word uttered into the Holy Ghost¹⁷⁹.

50. If we do not know ourselves as God has created us, we won't know ourselves what the sin has made us like.

51. All of them who have received, even from here, the fullness of the consummation of Christ, they are alike according to the age into Ghost.

52. All of them who have been bearing the toils, they will enjoy the rewards too. But their quantity and their kinds, namely their measure, they will be shown by that order and by that state from there, through impartation.

53. The sons of the resurrection of Christ will be, he says, minds, namely like the angels, for they have been reached to be saints through incorruptibility and deification.

54. In the future ages, the angels and the saints will increase in adding the gifts and they will never come to an end, or they will never weaken in desiring those goods. This is for, in that age, there won't be weakening or diminishing of the virtue in favor of the sin.

55. You will reckon that is a consummate man here, he who has received the resemblance of the ages of Christ, as an earnest; and the one who will be a consummate man in the future age, he will be shown the power of the godhead.

56. He who is consummate in virtue even from here, according to the ages of the Ghost, he will have, in the future age, an honor and a deification equal to them whom he will be alike to¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁹ The saints, by reciprocally knowing, in the future age, their inwards, they will know, by seeing, everything they will have to tell to one another, and they will reciprocally see their being as an all-comprising word, and they will tell to one another everything they will have to say, through their reciprocal intimacy and in total sincerity. The soul will be, wholly, the light of the face.

¹⁸⁰ We won't realize our decay from humanity into sin, if we do not know our beauty from origin, which we return to, by cleaning up our sin and through the union with God Who is our role model and Whom we make our humanity transparent to.

57. The true glory, I say that is the knowledge of the sight or the Ghost, or also the detailed understanding of the dogmas, or the knowing of the true faith.

58. The awe is the consummate elevation of the soul's powers towards the known and united realities of the all-extolled glory. Or, again, the awe is the clean and whole elevation towards the borderless power, into light. And the ecstasy is not only the kidnapping of the soul's powers to the sky, but it is also the total exiting from the feeling itself. And the twofold love is the drunkenness of the Ghost that keeps the longing in movement¹⁸¹.

59. The ecstatic love into Ghost is of two kinds: that from heart and that ecstatic. The first is characteristic to them who are still on course to be lighted up; the second one is characteristic to them who are consummate in love. But both these kinds of love, they get out of feeling the mind they work upon, for the godlike love is the drunkenness of the natural mind in the higher realities of the Ghost, which the feeling is brought out too, from all its connections¹⁸².

60. The beginning and the cause of the thoughts it is the division, by disobedience, of the simple and unitary memory of the man. By that, the man has lost the memory about God too. This is because, by becoming composed out of simple and

¹⁸¹ Saint Gregory Sinaite discerns here between awe and ecstasy. The awe is the total elevation of the soul's powers to the known and united realities, namely the undivided realities of the greatness and glory of God. While there still is a difference amongst the known realities, these ones appear to be as limited and they do not stir up the awe. It is something else here than "distinguer pour unir" as Maritain said, or "distinguer pour connaître". But in awe, the soul still preserves his feeling, or the awareness of his joy for what he sees. The ecstasy elevates the soul even from self-feeling. That soul no longer knows that the joy is his, though that soul lives as state of borderless joy. The love, in both its forms, it has, in addition, the motion of the longing towards an ever-greater union, though it is like a drunkenness of the Ghost. Or, right this drunkenness is like an enthusiasm equivalent to a movement towards even more union. So, there is a feeling in this ecstatic love too.

¹⁸² Here is specified which the two degrees of the ecstatic love are: that on from heart and that one that is actually ecstatic. The first one is characteristic to them who are still on the road to be lighted up, namely those who still advance in their knowledge; the second one is characteristic to those who have reached beyond the stage of the first ones, at consummation. Are being brought here specifications to the Areopagite's categories.

Here too, it is specified what it means the elevation of the mind above feeling. It is about that feeling that is born out of the connection of pleasure or of pain with anything else.

diverse out of unitary, the memory has lost its unity together with its powers¹⁸³.

61. Healing the mind means turning the mind back, from the evil memory that gives birth to corruptive thoughts, to the mind's state from the beginning. This is because the disobedience, the tool of the sin, it didn't break only the simple memory of the soul towards the good, but also all the soul's powers, and so the soul's desires which were tending towards virtue they have been darkened¹⁸⁴. But the memory is being healed, by being elevated from that state that is contrary to nature, to that state that is above nature, mainly, by the perseverant remembrance of God, strengthened by prayer and crossed through by the Ghost.

62. The causes of the passions are the sinful deeds; the causes of the thoughts, are the passions; of the hallucinations, are the thoughts; of the images, the memory; of the memories, the forgetfulness¹⁸⁵; of the forgetfulness, the nescience; of the nescience, the carelessness; the carelessness is born out of the lusting desire; and the mother of the desires it is the fickleness; the cause of the fickleness is the work of the deed; and the deed is out of the reckless desire of the sin and out of the tendency of the senses towards the realities submitted to them.

63. The thoughts are the rational part; the passions furious in wrath; the memory of the beastly desire is in the lusting part. In the understanding part there are formed the

¹⁸³ The simple memory from the beginning was the ceaseless remembrance of God. Because we have lost this remembrance, the simple memory has become divided. So it was born and so it is being unfolding the diversity of the thought about the limited realities, in the same time with forgetting some aspects when remembering others. The man is not longer able to keep his mind on a sole thing, for the material things are limited and they cannot provide the man with a non-passing interest. But when the mind directs itself towards God (the memory comes from *admentem* – to keep the mind on something, or to keep something in your mind; remembering something means keeping something in mind), the mind no longer is divided by the thoughts passing one after another, for God is borderless and therefore He is a nourishment for contemplation. That's why, only in connection with God we can preserve the ceaseless memory, or the memory per se. Saint Gregory Sinaite proves himself to be a great analyst of the soul's conditions, and he brings convincing explanations to some teachings which were affirmed, most of the time, without being argued.

¹⁸⁴ Seemingly, in the text from *The Greek Philokalia*, there are some mistakes. There is said: "The healing of the original memory" and: "the disobedience created not only the *simple* memory of the soul, towards good".

¹⁸⁵ We have here a paradox; the cause of the tempting memories is caused by forgetting about our duty to do the good.

hallucinations; and in the cogitating part sprout out and work the images¹⁸⁶.

64. The rushing in of the evil thoughts it is like a river stream. Through there it comes the bait, and after that is born the agreeing to the sin, as a flooding with waves that covers the heart¹⁸⁷.

65. Reckon the pleasure as viscous, as a deep moor, or as a swamp of the debauchery. Such a swamp is the burden of the worldly worries which hinder the passionate mind and such a mind is sunk by the thoughts in the deep of the despair.

66. The Scriptures often called thoughts the things' rationalities too, as it called the images as rationalities and the rationalities as images. This happened because their movement (of the thoughts) is immaterial in itself, but through things it takes an image and it is transformed, and so the baith is known and it received a name through showing¹⁸⁸.

67. The sinful thoughts are the rationalities of the devils and such thoughts are forerunners to the passion, like the rationalities and the imaged belong to the things. It will be impossible to do something good of something evil, if your thought isn't lured, firstly. This is because the thoughts are the imageless movement of the bait of some things¹⁸⁹.

¹⁸⁶ Saint Gregory Sinaite is discerning here in addition to the rational part of the soul, the understanding part of the soul that seemingly has also the power of the imagination, and the cogitating part of the soul that has a power close to the power of the imagination, but it has in it also the power of any critical watchfulness.

¹⁸⁷ The heart has here the meaning of the self-awareness. Agreeing to the sin will cover the self-awareness as a flood with waves.

¹⁸⁸ It seems that Saint Gregory Sinaite understood through λογισμοί, not meanings, but concrete images of the things. So it turns out from the content of the heads no. 62, 66, 67 and so on. He explains what the natural rationalities themselves, of the things, which have their origin in the thinking of God, they can become like, through their seen images, thoughts tempting to sin, or baits. So, Saint Gregory showed that himself understood the passing of the thoughts into concrete images, in things, as some materializations of those thoughts. Saint Gregory is explaining here and he will explain in the head no. 68 too, the idea belonging to Saint Maximos the Confessor, about the simple meanings and about the complex meanings (with the passion) of the things (*Heads about Love*, III, 42-43; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 85). By and large, Saint Gregory Sinaite develops the thinking of the previous Holy Fathers, by applying it, in a more accentuated manner, to the concrete situations of the fight against temptations.

¹⁸⁹ Contrary to what we would expect, Saint Gregory Sinaite understands (at least here) through thoughts, non-concretized impulses towards sin. Consequently, the thoughts are rationalities of the demons as spirits. They enter our soul or they enter the images of the things and so they find in the images of the things the concretizations of the sin's objects. The demons can crook the images of the things in shapes tempting to sins, because these ones are

68. The matter of the things gives birth to simple thoughts; and the devilish bait contrives the evil ones. So, the natural thoughts and rationalities differ from those which are contrary to the nature and from those which are above nature¹⁹⁰.

69. The natural thoughts work, similarly, to changing the man, as the thoughts contrary to the nature work too. But the thoughts according to the nature change themselves, immediately, into the thoughts which are above-nature¹⁹¹. The thoughts are reciprocal causes to the changing from within them and they give birth to one another. The thoughts about the material things are causes to the birth and to the changing into the devilish thoughts. Those ones are born and are changed out of bait. And the godlike thoughts are changes out of the natural thoughts. This is for the natural thoughts give birth to the above-nature thoughts. The changing of each thought it is cause and occasion to the birth of the related thoughts, in a fourfold manner.

70. Keep in mind that, before thoughts, there are their causes; before hallucinations there are the thoughts; before passions, there are the hallucinations; and before devils there are the passions, as a chain and as a cunning order of the disorder's ghosts. One depends on another. But no one amongst them it works through itself, but they are set in work by devils. Neither the hallucination makes images to itself, nor the passion works, without the hidden devilish power. This is for, though satan feel crushed, he can do even more against us, because of our carelessness, and he boasts because of us.

plasticized concretizations of some divine rationalities, ones which can be thought by the demons too, but they crook them and they introduce within them tempting modifications.

¹⁹⁰ Not all the thoughts are evil. There are too, simple thoughts of the things, which are identical to the things' natural rationalities, which are preexisting in God Who is the Creator of the things. And there are even thoughts which are above-nature. We could understand by that the thoughts which are above God, about angels, about our relations with God, but they might be also thoughts about things, when we see in them the things' meanings deepened in the ambience of endless light, of God.

¹⁹¹ If we do not let our according to nature thoughts to fall into thoughts tempting towards material things, which change the nature of our thoughts into evil, our according to nature thoughts could easily become thoughts above nature. Besides, it is very difficult to draw a border line between the natural character of the thoughts and their above-nature character. This is for everything that is natura, it is understood as having its origin in God and being understood into God.

71. They give our mind a shape, better said their shape us in their image and they lure us through the habituation to the passion, that masters and works within our soul. This is because the devils have the habit of the passions, as cause of forming images (idols) within our mind. But they make our power of imagination to work in diverse modes and in many shapes, either when we are woken up or when we are sleeping. This is because the devils dress up themselves and they change themselves in diverse images; the devils of the lust change themselves, sometimes, in pigs, some other times in donkeys, and some other times in stallions, aroused and fiery; the devils of the anger they sometimes change themselves in pagans, and some other times in lions; the devils of the covetousness sometimes change themselves into wolves, other times in leopards, and some other times in foxes; the devils of the daring change themselves into dogs; the devils of the idleness change themselves into tomcats; the devils of the fornication they sometimes change themselves in snakes, while some other times they change themselves into ravens and jays. The devils of the soul's passions transform themselves into birds, especially those form sky. The imagination has three causes, which the images of the ghosts are changed through, according to the three parts of the soul. That's why the hallucinations are of three sorts too: of birds, of beasts, and of animals, according to the lusting part, to the angry part, and to the rational part of the soul. The three chieftains of the passions always arm themselves against the three powers. And according to what passion gives image to the soul, the devils come close to us and they take a related image¹⁹².

72. The devils of the pleasure (of the voluptuousness) often come close as fire and burning coals. This is for the loving-of-pleasure ghosts ignite the lusting part of the soul, and they darken the cogitating part of the soul, by bewildering it. This is

¹⁹² Each passion gives the soul a certain image and, therefore, to our external countenance too. That's why, even the devils take, despite of being ghosts, certain shapes, according to the passion they cultivate the most. And they imprint that shape to us too, according to the passion they try to inspire us the most. The passions out of pride, they give us a countenance that resembles that of the haughty birds from the sky, for they are imprinted mostly into our cogitating part, and they make us haughty to countenance and holding our head up; the passions which lit the anger up, they give us the countenance of wild beasts; the passions which stir the lust up, they give us the countenance of animals. Behold the proof for the plasticization of the rationalities.

because the passion's pleasure is cause for: burning, bewilderment, and darkness.

73. The night of the passions is the darkness of the nescience. Or, again, the night is the kingdom which the passions are born in. In it reigns the master of the darkness and in it walk the ghosts which take images as forest's wild beasts, or like the birds of the sky, or as the crawling animals of the earth, trying, with howls, to kidnap and eat us (Ps. 103: 21¹⁹³).

74. In the time of working the passions, some of the thoughts go forwards, and other thoughts follow to them; the thoughts precede the hallucinations, and the passions follow to hallucinations. Regarding the devils, the passions precede them, and the devils follow to passions.

75. The beginning and the cause of the passions it is the evil use (the abuse); the beginning and the cause of the evil use it is the evil change; the beginning and the cause of the changing it is the tendency of the habituation of the will; the means for trying the will it is the bait; the cause of the bait are the devils, allowed by Providence in order us to show what our liberty is like.

76. The passionate habituation of the soul is the venom of the needle of the sin towards death. This is because, he who has soaked himself, willingly, with passions, he has his behavior motionless and unchanged¹⁹⁴.

77. The passions have diverse names, but they are divided in two categories: bodily and souly. The bodily passions are divided in: painful and causing of sin. The painful ones are subdivided, again, in: illnesses and guiding punishments. The souly passions are divided in passions: of the anger, of the lust, and of the rationality. The passions of the rationality are subdivided in: hallucinating and thinking. Amongst these ones, some of them are born out of the evil usage, others an unwilling and out of some forced circumstance, as there are the so-called

¹⁹³ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 21: "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God."; in ROB we have: Ps. 103: 22: "The lion cubs roar in order to grab and to ask from God their food." (E. l. t.'s n.)

¹⁹⁴ It is the motionless in an evil sense, that Saint Gregory Sinaite spoke about, in the head no. 39. He who is moved only by a passion, he is like motionless, because he doesn't move himself but he is moved, and he cannot move himself otherwise. It is a monotonous movement, and a helplessness of getting off that movement. Nothing happens within him, nothing that manifests, actually, the newness of the life. There is the death.

guiltless passions. The Holy Fathers called these ones as natural processes or features.

78. Others are the bodily passions and others are the passions of the soul; others are the passions of the lust and others are those of the wrath (of the anger); others are the passions of the rationality and others are those of the imagination. But they accompany one another and they work one with another. The bodily passions work with the passions of the lust, the souly passions work with those of the wrath; and, again, the rationality's passions work with those of the mind and the mind's passions work with those of the imagination and of the memory.

79. The passions of the wrath are: the anger, the bitterness, the shouting out, the quick ignition (the fierce spilling of the gall¹⁹⁵), the haughty daring, the haughtiness, the pride, and the others like those. Of the lust are: the greediness, the debauchery, the lack of restraint, the lack of satiation, the love for pleasure, the love for money, and the love for the self and this last one is the worst of all. And of the body are; the fornication, the adultery, the uncleanness, the debauchery, the injustice, the covetousness of the belly, the laziness, the light-mindedness, the love for adornments (the luxury), the love for parties, and the others like those. Those of the rational parts are: the lack of faith, the blasphemy, the cunningness, the plotting, the spying, the hypocrisy, the speaking of evil, the gossiping, the condemning, the contempt, the laughing at, the pretending, the lie, the speaking of evil things, the speaking of stupid things, the perpetrating of hidden deeds, the irony, the boasting, the desire of being pleasant to people, the haughtiness, the false oaths, the useless speaking. Of the mind are: the self-appreciation, the haughtiness, the praises, the strife, the envy, the self-content, the speaking against, the willing deafness, the imagination, the hallucinations, the misinterpretations, the desire to show yourself up, the love for glory, or the pride that is the first and the ultimate amongst all evils. And of the cogitation are: the scatterings, the straying, the slavery, the darkening, the blindness, the delusions, the baits, the approvals, the tendencies, the deviations and those which are similar to these ones. To say it briefly, all the evils which are enemy to the

¹⁹⁵ We think that such tendency can be described by the colloquial expression: "having a short fuse", namely getting angry / infuriated very easily (E. l. t.'s n.)

nature, they have been mixed with these three powers of the souls, as all the goods are withing these three powers of the soul, by nature.

80. Wonderful are the glorification words, full of awe, of David towards God: “Wonderful it has become, he says, Your knowledge towards me, for I cannot elevate myself up to it” (Ps. 139: 6¹⁹⁶) because of it being more powerful and impossible to reach and above my helpless knowledge and power. Even the body is non-understood. This is because of having a composed nature, one threefold in all ways, but it keeps, in a unique harmony, its limbs and parts. On the other hand, within body there master the numbers seven and two, which show the time and the nature, according to those who are initiated in numerology. Thus, the body too is a tool of the nature, one that shows the glory of the trinitarian greatness, according to the laws which rule the nature¹⁹⁷.

81. The nature’s laws are the diverse combination of the working limbs, which the word called as differences too, as equally numerous parts which the features of the body are shown within. Or, again, the natural law is worked in the work of each shape and of each limb, on the basis of its power. Like God keeps in working and He moves all the creation, likewise the soul keeps in working and moves the body’s limbs, and the soul moves each limb towards its work. But one must research why the God-bearer men says, on occasions, that the wrath and the lust are powers of the body, and, some other times, that those ones belong to the soul? We answer that, there is not incoherence amongst the words of the saints, to them who know those in detail, but both arguments are true and they are interchangeable in a wise manner, due to the creation of our soul and body for an untold way of cohabitation. This is for their joining is such that the soul can become consummate even from

¹⁹⁶ In KJB we have: Ps. 139: 6: “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 138: 6: “Wonderful is Your knowledge, and above me; it is high and I cannot reach it.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

¹⁹⁷ The number two that masters within body it shows the body’s dependent nature. For two are the eyes, two are the ears etc. But within the passing body, there master too the numbers three and seven, which represent the time. The body has a past and it has a future too, and the body’s life is repeated in cycles of seven days. They say also that the whole body’s matter is changed within seven years. The movement of the time in cycles of seven units, it is expressed by Genesis too, where it is said that God created the world in seven days. Seven represents the fulfillment of what moves within time. The number three may show also the being, the power, and the works.

here, while the body still remain non-consummate because of its growth through food. Thus, the soul has within himself the power of the desiring lust too, and the power of the wrath towards the vigor of the love, but since his conceiving the soul is built as rational and mental. This is for the soul hasn't been given a wrath without rationality and a lust without mind. Like the body too, it didn't have these ones thus, before. But, by being built incorruptible, the body didn't have juices out of which to follow the lust and the angry wrath. This is because, after disobedience, by falling down into corruption and into the thickness of the animals, there sprouted out, as unavoidable consequence, the wrath and the lust from within body too. That's why the body resists too, the will of the soul, through wrath and lust, when the body is dominant. And when the mortal obeys the rational, the body follows the soul towards committing the good deeds. So, only after the features which came later within body, they have been mixed with the traits of the soul, the man likened himself to the animals, by obeying the law of the sin, for the need of the nature and by becoming, from rational being, an animal, and out of man he became a beast¹⁹⁸. This is for the body, as the about-God-speakers say, it was created as incorruptible, as the body will resurrect too, though it was created able to receive the corruptibility too. And the soul was created as dispassionate (passionless¹⁹⁹). But both of them

¹⁹⁸ Saint Gregory explains everything the living body has out of the soul. Even the wrath and the lust the body takes them out of soul. So, the soul has been created for the cohabitation with the body, being able to compose and to uphold a living body. That's why the soul has been given the wrath and the lust, with the possibility of serving not only to some spiritual goals, but also to the maintaining and to the growing up of the body, of course, aiming too, to the spiritualization of the body and of the matter. Namely the wrath and the lust, by having at their basis a spiritual character, related to mind and to rationality, they receive, through the union of the soul with the body, an animalic character too, or a function in the service of the body as biological organism, related, in this concern, to the animalic one. One may say that, through wrath and lust, the soul's rationality has within itself the possibility to plasticize itself as an organized body. Of course, that doesn't mean that the soul existed, temporally, before the body existed, but the soul starts existing by manifesting himself in forming the body through the wrath (the energy) and the lust which are prolonged within body, for through these ones the soul starts - since the soul's bringing to existence - to be plasticized into body. Besides, by and large, the material plan isn't but a plasticized reality and, therefore, this rationality has in itself an energy and an impulse towards plasticizing, that, in the case of the human personal rationality, it equals to wrath and lust. When the wrath and the lust aren't well lead by rationality, there will be born the sins, and themselves the deformations and the decomposition tendencies of the body, as plasticization of the rational soul. That's why, the sin as disorder, it starts within soul, within rationality.

¹⁹⁹ (E. l. t.'s n.)

have become corrupted and the mixed, consequently to the too natural law of the movement of one within another (perichoresis) and because of the impartation of one within another. The soul has soaked in passions, better said devils, and the body has become like the speechless animals, by the work and by the mastery of the corruption. The powers of both the soul and the body, by becoming one, they have made the man to become, through anger and lust, an irrational and mindless animal. And so, the man has become alike to animals, according to the Scripture, and identical to them in all ways (Ps. 48: 21²⁰⁰)²⁰¹.

82. The soul, for being created rational through breath and understanding through life-giving-breath, the soul wasn't created by God in the same time with the beastly wrath and lust, but with the power of the desire and, in addition to that power, with the vigor of the love. Likewise, God neither has sown within body, at creation, since the beginning, the irrational wrath and lust. The man received these later, through disobedience, by becoming mortal, corruptible, and beastly²⁰².

83. The beginning and the cause of the virtues it is the good intention, and the follows the desire for good. Like God is the cause and the spring of all the good, likewise the beginning of the good within us it is the faith, better said it is Christ, the rock of the faith, Whom we have as beginning and foundation of all virtues. This is for we have placed on Him and we also build up on Him, all the good. He is the corner stone that connects us with Him²⁰³, and He is the pearl of great value which, by being searched for by the monk who enters the deep of the quietude, he sells all his wills by obeying the commandments²⁰⁴, in order

²⁰⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 49: 20: "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish."; in ROB we have: Ps. 48: 21: "The man, while being in honor, he didn't understand; he joined the mindless beasts and he likened himself to them." (E. l. t.'s n.)

²⁰¹ But the wrath and the lust prolonged themselves within body, at the beginning, not as animalic wrath and lust, but as a spiritual wrath and desire. Later on, by falling, they have taken the animalic character – or, the animalic character too.

²⁰² The wrath and the lust have been prolonging within body, since the beginning, and not as animalic wrath and lust, but as spiritual wrath and desire. Later on, there took, through falling, the animalic character - or also animalic.

²⁰³ It is about applying, to the individual believer, the expressions: Christ the cornerstone, Christ the rock of the faith, Christ the beginning of our life. Christ is within each of us the spring of the good, of the effort for achieving the virtues. On Him we build the body of the virtues.

²⁰⁴ Here we have an equally interesting interpretation of the biblical parable about the man who sells all his wealth in order to buy that field that contains the treasure of great value – namely the obedience that comprises Christ. The wealth are here the man's wills. That man

to gain Him. This is because the body, as the speakers about God say, it was created incorruptible, as it will resurrect too, though able to receive the corruptibility. And the soul was created as dispassionate. But both of them have been corrupted and mixed, consequently to the all-natural law of the movement of one into another (perichoresis), and because of being imparted with one another. The soul has been soaked with passions, better said with devils, and the body has become alike to the speechless beasts, through the work and through the mastery of the corruption. The powers of both of them becoming one, they have made the man to become, through anger and lust, an irrational and mindless animal. And so, the man has become like beasts are - according to the Scripture -, and identical to them in all ways (Ps. 48: 21²⁰⁵)²⁰⁶.

84. The virtues are balanced amongst themselves and all of the are gathered in one and they are accomplished in a sole composition and in a sole image of the virtue. This is for there are actual virtues and virtues which are greater than the virtues, which comprise and uphold the many virtues, or even all the virtues, as there is the godlike love, the humbleness, and the godlike patience. This is for the Lord says this: "Through your patience you will gain your souls" (Lk. 21: 19), but He didn't say: by fasting, or by taking vigil. And through patience I understand that patience according to God. That patience is the empress of the virtues, and the foundation of the manly goods. For that patience is the peace in wars, the clear sky in time of storm, the unremovable steadfastness within them who have achieved it. Him who has achieved this patience in Christ Jesus, neither the

who wants to be saved, he renounces to his wills which cannot save him, in order to improprie to himself, through obedience, the will of Christ, in order to fulfill Christ's will or commandments, for by this he achieves the eternal life. He who loves, he will renounce to his wills for the beloved one and for the love of that one. This is for the believer has in Christ the life that he doesn't have by fulfilling his wills.

²⁰⁵ In KJB we have: Ps. 49: 20: "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish."; in ROB we have: "The man being in honor, he didn't understand that; the joined the mindless beasts and he resembled himself to them". (E. l. t.'s n.)

²⁰⁶ By that the soul too has worsen his quality. Thew wrath and the lust, by being placed, in a greater measure, at the service of the growing up and of the upholding the body, they have placed, by that, the soul himself, in a greater measure, at the service of the body and they have taken, even within soul, an irrational, animalic character. It is very difficult to find in the patristic writing, such a perseverant tarrying upon explaining the complex and mysterious connection between soul and body, as it is done in these heads of Saint Gregory Sinaite. This writing of his, it is dominated by the anthropological preoccupation.

weapons, nor spears or the battlefields will be able to harm him, not even the wars of the devils or the dark multitude of the enemies.

85. The virtues, though they are born out of one another, they have their origin in those three powers of the soul, except the godlike virtues. This is for the cause and the beginning of the four comprising virtues, within the natural people, and of the four godlike virtues, out of which and through which are founded all the other virtues of the sapience, of the manhood, of the righteousness, and of the justice, it is the godlike wisdom of the knowers of God, that one moved by the Ghost. This godlike wisdom, by moving within mind in a fourfold manner, it works all the virtues, and not at once, but on each virtue at its time, as it wants. On one virtue as light, on another as nimble power and as instillation always in movement, on the third one as sanctifying and cleaning power, and on the fourth one as dew of the cleanness, that gladdens and cleans the burns of the passions. As it has been said before, to each of them amongst the consummate ones, each virtue gives him a consummate work according to his characteristics.

86. The consummate strength of the soul won't be given – as a gift – by the own skills and zeal, if these ones aren't rooted by grace, as habits. This is for each of them has its own gift (out of grace), as a characteristic work, so that it can attract to itself, by the habituation to and by the nature of the good, on those who are imparted with it, even when they do not want that. When we reach that gift, that gift will remain unchanged and non-estranged. Then we have the grace of the Ghost, working within our limbs as a living soul²⁰⁷. That's why, the whole group of the virtues it is dead without grace; and within them who reckon that they have the virtues, or that they have achieved the virtues in a consummate manner, and that the virtues are their

²⁰⁷ The rooting of the virtues within soul it cannot be done by own efforts, but only by grace, that is the God's strong work that has become our work. The virtues, as steadfast openings and relations of the soul with God, they won't become stronger within us, if God Himself doesn't stay open towards us, or in a communication of love and of power with us. In virtues, the Ghost of God works with our subject as some kind of unique subject. By that, the virtues represent the steps of our union with God Who is a loving Person (Subject). That's why the Ghost of God is the soul of our virtues.

own only, at them the virtues are only shadows and images of the thought but not consummate realities²⁰⁸.

87. So, the comprising virtues are four: the manhood, the sapience, the righteousness, and the justice. Are close to those, by abundance or by diminution, eight sins called and reckoned by the people from the world as virtues: to the manhood, there are haughtiness and the fear; to the sapience, there are cunningness and the nescience; to the righteousness, there are debauchery and the helplessness; to the justice, there are greediness and the injustice, or the narrowness of the desire. But not only the comprising and natural virtues, which are above any diminution or swelling, but also through those with the deed, they keep the middle²⁰⁹. They have, as together-working, the free decision into the righteousness of the reckoning; while the sins, they have the deviation and the self-appreciation. To the fact that the right virtues keep the middle, it is witnessing the proverb that says: "Then You will make good all the ways" (Prov. 2: 9). So, all of them are founded on the three powers of the soul, out of which are born and on which are built up, having as foundation of their building the four comprising virtues, better said Christ, through Whom are natural ones are cleaned up through the ones with the deed, and the godlike and above-nature ones are given into the kindness of the Ghost.

88. Amongst the virtues, there are some with the deed, other are natural, other are godlike and from the Ghost. The virtues with the deed are due to the free choice; the natural virtues belong to the nature; and the godlike virtues belong to the grace.

89. As the soul has the power to give birth to the virtues, likewise, the soul has the power to give birth to passions. But the soul gives birth to virtues according to the nature, while the soul gives birth to passions by acting against nature. As cause for producing the good or the evil, the soul has the movement of

²⁰⁸ Within him who reckons that the virtues belong to him, there is not real opening towards God, neither towards people. This is because, in real opening, one must live the initiative of both sides. I am really open to another for he is also open to me, so that my virtue is his work too. Otherwise, my virtue is only an intention of the virtue but not an accomplished virtue. He who affirms that he can do the good only by himself, right through this pride of his, by disregarding the another's contribution, he locks up himself into himself, and he doesn't warm up the another, because of not cherishing him as it is due, as absolutely necessary to his achievement.

²⁰⁹ This is for, the virtues with the deed are real virtues too.

the will, as a center towards its lines, or as the needle of the balance, having the will helper and working on the side the soul turns his will to. This is because the intention can be directed towards either of them, and it helps the work towards either of them. The man bears within himself the inclination both towards good and evil: towards one by nature, and towards another by the urge of will's self-affirming.

90. The Scripture calls the virtues as female virgins, for they mixing and union with the soul, the virtues being regarded as a sole body and ghost with the soul. This is for the image of the female virgin is the symbol of the love, and the countenance of these holy female virgins it is the proof of the innocence and of the cleanness. This is for the grace uses to give godlike countenance him whom these virtues are imprinted into, and the grace uses to make them who receive the grace as kindred to God.

91. So, the chieftains of the big passions are three: the covetousness of the belly, the love for money, and the vain glory. And the ones who follow to those, are: the fornication, the anger, the sadness, the idleness, and the pride. But, likewise, there are three comprising virtues which resist those passions: the cleanness, the gentleness, the joy, the manhood, and the humiliation. But knowing the whole bunch of virtues, according to the power, to the work, and to the fragrance of each virtue and of each sin, it is not a thing that can be had by anyone wanting that, but it can be achieved only by him who committed them and who suffered with the deed and with the word and who has received, from the Ghost, the heavenly gifts of the knowledge and of the discernment.

92. Amongst virtues, some of them work, while others are worked. The virtues work, by coming within us when they should and as much and what they want like. And we work, according to our free decision and according to the moral habituation of our skillfulness. But those virtues work existentially, while we will work by being guided by some model and by shaping on ourselves according to that model, if that model matches all our works according to the archetypes from above. But very few people are existentially imparted with the realities known with the mind, before the future receiving of the

incorruptibility come. Here we work and we receive the toils and the images, and not really the virtues²¹⁰.

93. He serves the holy work of the Gospel, according to Paul (Rom. 15: 16), he who receives and gives through work, to others too, the illumination from Christ, by sowing, like a godlike seed, the word, in the souly fields of the listeners. Let your word to be like through grace (Col. 4: 6), with godlike kindness, in order it to give grace to them who listen with faith. Then, by calling the teachers as plowmen, and by calling the taught ones as field, he shows in a very wise manner, the first ones as plowing and sowing the godlike word, while the others are the fattened land, sown with virtues and bringing forth many fruits. This is for the holy religious service it truly isn't only the work of the godlike realities, but it is also the impartation and the giving of the goods – as gifts – towards others.

94. That word that starts by uttering to teaching, it is diverse, and it is composed, in many ways, out of four kinds: the word out of teaching, the word out of reading, the word out of deed, and the word out of grace. Then, like the water is one by nature, but it is transformed and changed, according to the diverse features of the field which the water comes out of, in a quality or in another, so that the water is felt as tasting bitter, or sweet, or salty, or some other time the water is smelly, likewise it is the uttered word, by being changed according to eth moral state of each one, so the word can be known out of his work and out of the benefit that word brings.

95. For the word has been given towards the joy of each rational nature, like some diverse foods, the soul feels the pleasure produced by the words, so that the soul received the words diversely. The soul has the word of the knowledge as a pedagogue, one that shapes the soul's behaviors, as one that waters the soul as a water of the resting (Ps. 22: 3²¹¹); and that word of the deed, as a greenery place (Ps. 22: 2²¹²), that fattens

²¹⁰ The existential impartation with the virtues, it is the unmediated impartation with Him Whom the powers of the good have their spring into. These powers work themselves within us, for God is their existential spring. But we must bring our contribution too. That's why, they work, partially, within us, while they are partially worked by us too. Where there doesn't take place the existential impartation with the godlike virtues, we won't succeed in committing the virtues, but we only give our toils.

²¹¹ In KJB we have: Ps. 23: 2: "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."; in ROB we have: Ps. 22: 2: "At pasture place, there He dwelled me; at the resting's water He fed me." (E. l. t.'s n.)

²¹² Vid supra. (E. l. t.'s n.)

the word up; that word of the grace, as a cup that drunken him up (Ps. 22: 5²¹³) and it gladdens it (Ps. 53: 19²¹⁴); and the untold joy of the grace, as an oil that gladdens the face (Ps. 53: 17²¹⁵) and it makes the face shiny.

96. But the soul doesn't have those only within himself as life, but the soul sometimes hears them from others too, and the soul feels them towards his own learning; namely, when both of them are mastered by love and faith, one of them listening with faith, and the other one teaching him with love, and so fulfilling, without haughtiness and without vain-glory, the words of the virtues. The first one receives the word of the teaching as pedagogue, and he receives the word of the reading as nourishing; he receives the word of the deed as an inward and all-sweet guide to The Bridegroom; he receives the illuminating word of the Ghost as a word that unites The Bridegroom-Word with him, and it gladdens him²¹⁶. This is for, if any word comes out of the mouth of God (Mt. 4: 4), it means that those words come out of Ghost through the mouth of the saints, are words that come out of the mouth of God, or out of the all-sweet breath of the Ghost for the word²¹⁷. That's why not everyone rejoice of them, but only them who are worthy of them. Consequently,

²¹³ In KJB we have: Ps. 23: 5: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."; in ROB we have: Ps. 22: 5: "You have prepared table before me, against them who trouble me; You have anointed my head with oil and Your cup is watering me as a strong one." (E. l. t.'s n.)

²¹⁴ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 15: "And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 103: 16: "In order they to bring bread out of earth and the wine gladdens the heart of the man;". (E. l. t.'s n.)

²¹⁵ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 15: "And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."; in ROB we have: Ps. 103: 17: "In order to gladden the face of the man and the bread strengthens the heart of the man." (E. l. t.'s n.)

²¹⁶ As there exist an external history of the revelation, as God's gradual coming closer to people, likewise there exist a history of God's coming closer to our individual as person. The soul receives the teaching word from another, whom he finds out about Christ through, as He Who will come to him, and then the word which the soul nourishes and grows it up through the soul's own reading, and then the word of the stage of working the virtues. This is for the deeds are too the words which he teaches and he is taught through. This one leads inside The Bridegroom Christ, and that word is sweet both to him and to them whom his deeds have effect upon, with the deeds' kindness. Finally, it is Christ Himself lived in the union with Him, as being the Word-Person, and as the spring of the words and as Bridegroom, or as the partner for the full love. This is for, the soul in Greek is of feminine gender (ψυχή).

²¹⁷ We speak for God spoke and for He continues speaking. But God speaks very intimately through saints, who have been united with God into Ghost.

they who are gladdened here with the Ghost, they are very few. And they who are delighted with the Word, they are truly speaking²¹⁸. The many, they know and they are imparted only with the images of the words, through memory, but they still aren't imparted, through feeling, with the true bread of the future, or with the Word of God²¹⁹. This is because, only This One gives Himself there, as a gift, to them who are worthy of consummate sweetening, without being eaten, without ending, and without ever being sacrificed.

97. It is impossible to taste the sweetness of the godlike realities without the understanding feeling (of the mind). This is because, as he who has blunted his senses and so he has made them unworking towards the realities submitted to senses, so that he neither sees, nor he hears, neither he smells, because of being him numbed, better said because of being him half dead, likewise him who has numbed his soul's according-to-nature powers, through passions, he has made them insensitive towards the work and the impartation with the mysteries of the Ghost. This is because, he who doesn't see, who doesn't hear, and who doesn't feel spiritually, he is dead, because of not being Christ within him, and neither is him moving and working within Christ²²⁰.

²¹⁸ All people are speaking, for they are in the image of God. But speaking in the full meaning of the word, are they who feel, with the whole intensity, the Word of God as addressing them and as speaking through them, and so the appropriate the godlike Word Who becomes their word.

²¹⁹ Only they who are delighted as a bride is with the bridegroom, through the union with the godlike Person-Word, as He is the spring of the words, they too are truly speaking, or speaking persons-words. Only their words are truly comforting, strengthening, and illuminating, as they are too as persons. Namely, only they have the words of the Ghost of Christ, for they have the Embodied Christ within them. And to this state only few people reach while they still are here.

²²⁰ As long as we have only the words of Christ, so long we will have only the images of the Word-Person. In order us to have him, we must have the "understanding feeling" of His presence. But won't be able to save this feeling as long as our soul's powers are blunted by sin, or turned towards our egotistic interests. Only when Christ Himself lives within us, He will strengthen our powers of feeling Him. The "feeling of the mind", or the "understanding feeling", it was used by Saint Gregory Sinaite and by Diadochus, in order to indicate a spiritual perceiving of the presence of God, and not only a theoretical deduction about Him, through rationality (head no. 36; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 348). Through this "feeling" one perceives not only the presence of God, but also the various goods which irradiate out of God. The expression "feeling of the mind" is used in order to indicate a contact with the spiritual reality of God, analogue to the contact we have through the senses of our body with the sensitive realities.

98. The senses have an equal to and the same work with the soul's powers, not to say one and the same. Especially when the senses are healthy. This is for, through those ones, they are alive and working these ones too, and in both of them it is mixed the life-maker Ghost. The man gets ill when he bears within himself the general helplessness of the passions, by always laying in the idleness's infirmary. This is for the senses look at the realities submitted to them, while the soul's powers see limpidly the realities known through understanding, especially when there is no devilish fight within them, a fight that would resists the law of the mind and of the ghost. But when they unite together, and so they become unitary through the Ghost, then they know, in an unmediated manner and existentially, the godlike realities and the human realities, as they nature is; and their rationalities look, limpidly and clean, at that One Cause of all realities, namely the Holy Trinity, as much as it is possible²²¹.

99. He who appeases himself, he owes, in the first place, to have as foundation these five virtues, which he will erect the building of his works on: the silence, the restraint, the vigil, the humbleness, and the patience. And as works pleasant to God, he must have these three: the singing, the prayer, and the reading; and the manual labor, if he is helpless at doing the three works previously mentioned. This is for the mentioned virtues, they not only comprise all others, but they uphold one another. He must occupy himself, in the morning, with the remembrance of God, through prayer, and with the appeasing of his heart. In the first hour, he must diligently pray; in the second hour, he must read; in the third hour, he must sing; in the fourth hour, he must pray; in the fifth hour, he must read, in the sixth hour, he must sing; in the event hour, he must pray; in the eighth hour, he must sing; in the tenth hour, let him eat; in the eleventh hour, let him sleep, if he needs it; in the twelfth hour, he must sing the

²²¹ The work of the senses isn't separated from the work of the soul's powers, when both of them are healthy. The man sees in the same time, the sensitive realities and the intelligible realities through the body's senses full of soul's perceiving powers. But full unity of their work and the extension of the perceiving of the spiritual realities all the way to God, through the mediation of the work of the bodily senses, it is done through the Holy Ghost. So, the Apostle saw the godlike light on Tabor, right through the sense of the body's sight, full of the power of the Holy Ghost.

evening songs. And so, by crossing well the time of the day, he will be pleasant to God²²².

100. He must gather, as a bee, out of all virtues which are more useful. And thus, by being imparted with all the virtues, bit by bit, him to make the great joining of the works of the commandments, out of which one gains the honey of the wisdom, towards the gladdening of the souls.

101. And if you want to cross more easily, the night time too, listen to this: the night vigil is of three kinds for beginners, for them who have reached the middle, and for advanced ones. Let the beginner sleep for a half of night, and let them take vigil for the other half of the night, either starting from evening and finishing at midnight, or starting from midnight up to morning; let the middle ones take vigil starting from evening, for an hour or two, and then let them sleep for four hours, and then let them get up for Matins, and then let them pray for six hours, until the morning comes; then, let them sing for the first hour and sit down in order to appease themselves, as it has been told before; then, let them either observe the order of the works on hours, or let them keep the prayer uninterrupted, according to the habituation of each one of them. And let the consummate ones stand, for the whole night, and take vigil²²³.

102. Behold, we are mentioning here about food too, namely that it suffices 300 grams of bread, to him who lives in asceticism and aims to appease on himself, and let him drink two glasses of wine, unmixed, and three glasses of water. Let him nourish himself with what he can find. Let him not look for foods which he would lust for, but let him use, with restraint, the food he is provided with by God's taking care. But the best and shortest teaching is, for them who want to live attentively, it is: they to guard the three more comprising virtues: the fasting, the taking of vigil, and the prayer, while strengthening, with the

²²² The first hour means six in the morning. He is required to repeat, for three times, the prayer, the reading, and the singing. At 4 p.m., the monk will eat, at 6 p.m. he will sleep, and at 6 p.m. he will utter the evening prayers. This must be the daily program for a monk.

²²³ Here is given the night rule. It differs for beginners, for the ones who are in the middle on the path to consummation, and for the consummate ones. The beginners must take vigil starting from 6 p.m. up to 12 at night, or vice versa, starting from midnight up to 7-8 in the morning, and then to sleep until midnight (at Matins), or to take vigil the whole night. The consummate ones, they must take vigil for the whole night, standing, and in a ceaseless prayer.

greatest power they can, the last one, for it is the support of everything else.

103. The appeasement (the hesychia) needs, before all: faith, patience, love with the whole heart, strength, power, and hope. This is for, he who believes, even if he doesn't achieve what he is looking for, maybe because of his carelessness, or because of other reason, in the hour of his death, it will be impossible him not to be filled up with the fruits of his faith and ascesis, and him not to see the release, that is Jesus Christ, and the redemption and the salvation of the soul, the Word God-the Man²²⁴. And the one who doesn't believe, he will surely be condemned in the hour of his death. Or, he has even been condemned already, says the Lord (Jn. 3: 18). This is because, he who serves the pleasures and searches for the glory from people, and not from the glory from God (Jn. 5: 45), he is a miscreant, he says. Even if it seems, as he speaks, a believer, someone like this one has deceived himself, without noticing that. He will hear then: "Because you haven't taken Me in your heart and because you have cast me behind you, I too will reject you" (Ezek. 5: 11). The believer must have a good hope, and he must believe in the truth of God as confessed in all Scriptures, but let him confess his helplessness in order him not to receive his twofold and unavoidable condemnation.

104. Nothing makes the heart so crushed, or the soul so humble, like the loneliness into knowledge and the silence about everything²²⁵. And nothing damages so much, the state of quietude, and nothing kidnaps its godlike power, as do these six comprising passions: the daring, the covetousness of the belly, the much-speaking, the scattering, the haughtiness, and the master of the passions, that is the self-appreciation. He who has willingly fully accustomed himself to them, he is getting ever darkened as the advances in them and he will become callous. If he rises himself again, by setting up a new beginning, with faith and with zeal, he will achieve again, what he is searching for,

²²⁴ Jesus is the liberation, for He is free, and for He is the spring that all the power of the liberty emanates from, or the power upon the enslaving passions.

²²⁵ The loneliness depresses many people. It seems to them that they have no help, no attention from anybody. The loneliness makes the ascetic feel their heart crushed. They feel, in a more accentuated manner, that they do not exist by themselves, or that they do not have the true life by themselves. The loneliness makes them no longer trust themselves. They reach the true conscience of what they are by themselves, to that conscience united with the humbleness.

especially if he humiliates himself and searches for. But if he is mastered within, because of his carelessness, by one of the passions mentioned above, then all the other evil passions, by rushing in together with the killing faithlessness, and they make his soul desert, as another Stronghold of Babylon, because of reaching to be mastered by the disturbances and by the confusions of the devils (Isa. 13: 21). Thus, the last ones will become worse than the first ones (Mt. 12: 45), and he ends to be a furious enemy and an accuser of them who occupy themselves with the appeasing, by always sharpening himself, his tongue, against them, as a sharp two-edged sword²²⁶.

105. The waters of the passions, out of which grows the muddy and mixed sea that overflows upon the soul that wants to appease himself, they cannot be crossed except in the light ship of the non-gathering material of things and of the all-comprising restraint. This is because out of unrestraint and out of the love for matter, there spring up the torrents of the passions, which flow over the earth of the heart and they bring into heart all the rottenness and the matter of the thoughts, causing confusion to the mind, and disturbance to the cogitation, and heaviness to the body, and discouraging, darkening, and numbing the soul and the heart and taking the heart and the soul out of their according-to-nature accustoming and feeling.

106. Nothing makes the soul of those who appease themselves, so drowsy, so discouraged, and so mindless, as the love for the self does, that is the mother of all passions. This is because when one amongst those people cherishes more the resting of the body than the toils for virtue and he when he reckons that is a useful knowledge not to willingly tire himself with the work, but he better occupies himself with the easy commandments which bring only a little sweat, then the unseen enemies sow within his soul the lack of courage towards the work of the appeasement and from strong and undefeated they make him weak in work²²⁷.

107. There is no better and more important medicine - to to them who feel themselves as too weak to work the commandments, and who have seen that isn't easy to reject

²²⁶ Here we might have, an allusion to the attacks undertook by Barlaam upon the hesychasts.

²²⁷ The taking heed at yourself, joined with the fight against passions of pleasure and of the scattering of the thoughts, and with the ceaseless remembrance of God, it is an exercise that requires a great effort and it brings a huge strength him who practices it.

yourself the muddy darkness – as there is the obedience with faith and without discernment, in all aspects. This is for, them who drink this, it becomes a life-giving medicine, composed of several virtues, and it will be as a knife that cleans, at once, the pus of the wounds. He who choses this amongst all, in order him to fulfill it with faith and with simplicity, he has cut off, at once, all the passions. He has not only reached the quietude, but he has even achieved the quietude wholly, through obedience, and he has found Christ Himself, and he has become and he is going to be called as Christ's follower and servant.

108. Without having within himself the work of the crying and without living into crying, it is impossible to anybody to endure the heat of the quietude²²⁸. But he who weeps and cogitates at the fearsome things from before death, and from after death, before the death will have come, he is going to have both patience and humbleness, which are the two foundations of the quietude. And he who occupies himself with the appeasement, without the things we have just mentioned above, he is always going to have, as company, the soul's lack of courage and the self-appreciation. And out of these ones are multiplied the slaveries, and the straying that pushed us to drowsiness. Out of here will come the unrestraint, the daughter of the carelessness, one that makes the body drowsy and weak, and the mind as darkened and callous. Then Jesus hides Himself, and the place of the mind is occupied with a multitude of images and thoughts.

109. Not everyone is able to taste, with his feeling, the kind of the knowledge from the present time or from future. This is because, it can be felt only by them who deprive themselves of glory and of love, here or there. He is like a fearsome torturer who torments in many ways the guilty ones, and he always shows his zeal of his rebuking, unveiling it with wrath as an awful sword. And the so-called zeal, or heavenly anger, it moves in a threefold manner: towards the opposite realities, towards nature, and towards soul, by being moved by conscience; it commands us to rush it towards enemies as an angry sword, making us to get infuriated. If it is victorious, by bringing into submission those two to the one (to the soul), it will become

²²⁸ The quietude is like the heat of the day, because of lacking the outside distractions. But in the end, after one accustoms himself to it, it will become sweet, for he will have reached the unveiling of the spiritual goods from the union with God.

manhood, by being directed towards God²²⁹. But if the soul obeys those two, namely the sin and the body, at the end it will become to him a merciless accuser, because of the soul willingly enslaving himself to the enemies. Starting from there, the soul will commit the shameful deeds. This is because of the soul who has lost his virtuous state and has fallen, getting separated from God.

110. Amongst all the passions, two are harder: the fornication and the idleness, which confuse and weaken the poor soul, and they depend on one another, and they are just like a pair. They are difficult to fight against, and they are impossible to defeat, and they cannot consummately be defeated by us. One of them grows more in the lusting part, but it comprises, by nature, without discernment, the matter of both the soul and the body; this is because its pleasure is mixed, entire, in all the limbs. The other one, by dominating, in the beginning, the cogitation, it comprises, like an ivy, the whole soul and body, and it makes the nature lazy, weak, and indolent. Those two cannot be consummately cast out or defeated, before the blessed dispassion, when the soul receives the power from the Holy Ghost that gives the soul liberation, power, and deep peace within heart, and it gladdens the soul through appeasement²³⁰. So, the fornication is the beginning, the empress, the master, and the pleasure that comprises all the pleasures, and it has as companion the idleness that carries, like a difficult to defeat cart, the chieftains of satan. Through fornication and idleness, the causes of the passions entered the life of the poor of us.

111. The beginning of the prayer of the mind, it is the work, and then comes the cleaning power of the Ghost and the mind's holy and mysterious liturgy, as the beginning of the

²²⁹ The zeal, or the natural anger, we start it like on a sword, against the natural or sinful urges of the body and of the soul. With the help of the anger, we often succeed in liberating us from those urges. This equals to submitting them to God. In this case, the zeal is directed towards God, in order to serve Him. If the anger isn't victorious and the soul remains submitted to the body (to the nature) and to the sin, the zeal or the anger will become a merciless torment to the soul, for they will have become helpers to the passions against the soul, and the soul won't feel comfortable in that slavery.

²³⁰ The hardest amongst passions are the fornication and the idleness. The human being can get liberated from them only with the help from God, and one can obtain God's help by the ceaseless remembrance of God, or through continuous prayer. This is for, where this prayer is there will be the Holy Ghost too. Only this prayer, done with the power of the Holy Ghost, it will bring the dispassion, or the liberty and the quietude.

appeasement is the getting out from amongst things and worries; the middle is the enlightening power; and the end is the ecstasy (the mind's getting out) and the kidnapping of the mind to God²³¹.

112. The spiritual religious (holy) service, before the above-mind future joy, it is the work of the mind that mysteriously sacrifices and is imparted with the Lamb of God, in the altar of the soul. And eating the Lamb of God in the understanding altar of the soul, it means not only understanding Him and being us imparted with Him, but it means also that we become like the Lamb by taking His countenance, in the future. This is for, here we take the rationalities, but then we hope to take themselves the realities of the mysteries²³².

²³¹ Saint Gregory Sinaite sees in the prayer of the mind three stages too: the beginning is the holy mass brought to God, as cleaning work; in that, there is no separation between the man's effort and the cleaning power of the Ghost. The second stage consists of mind's illumination; and the third stage consists of ecstasy or of the mind's exiting from itself and towards God. Are being applied here, to the mind's prayer within heart, the three steps of the Areopagite's ascension, but the step of the consummation is being identified here to the kidnapping, or to the ecstasy, one that is just the full union of the mind with God. This third stage is like some kind of moment of the self-sacrifice and of elevation to God, as it takes place with Christ at Liturgy, but also to us together with Christ. Thus, the spiritual ascension of the soul, with its three stages: the purification of the worldly worries, the illumination, and the union with God, they correspond to the three phases of the Liturgy: the separation from the worldly worry by entering the church, the illumination through the biblical readings, and the ecstasy through our sacrifice together with Christ.

²³² The preoccupation of Saint Gregory it is narrowed here to the third moment: of the sacrifice. Having in mind this final purpose of the sacrifice, or of the ecstasy, the whole spiritual ascent can be called as religious (holy) service, or as a Liturgy. This is for it culminates, at its turn, not only in a sacrifice of him who reaches the ecstasy of the prayer, but also a sacrifice of the Lamb Who he who sacrifices himself is imparted with. This is for only out of the power of the sacrifice or of the full self-giving, as a gift, of the Lamb towards the Father, it can sacrifice itself too, the mind of his who prays, forgetting about himself, in his leaving towards God and in his union with God. Actually, the union of his mind with God in this ecstasy or in this sacrifice of his, it is also a union with Christ Who sacrifices Himself. The mind is, in the same time, not only sacrifice, but the mind is also an altar, as the highest place of the soul, and the mind is also a sacrificer, for the mind represents the human subject who brings himself as sacrifice. The mind sacrifices the lamb together with itself, or the Lamb sacrifices the mind together with himself, for the union between the two is so great that their works are imprinted on into another, and the subjects are covered. The Lamb is within mind, and the mind is within Christ-the Lamb. Then the mind eats the Lamb, not only for the mind understands Him, but also for the mind assimilated Him, by becoming like Him, and one with Him, without confounding. But the union from here is only an image of the eschatological full union, still having in itself the dynamism that leads us towards that full union. Here, we somehow impropriate only His rationalities; though, in these rationalities incorporated in the

113. The prayer is, at the beginners, as a fire of the gladness, gushing up from heart; at the consummate ones, the prayer is like a working and of good fragrance light. Or, again, the prayer is the preaching of the Apostles, the work of the faith, or, better said, it is the unmediated faith, the hypostasis of the hoped realities, it is working love, angelic movement, the power of the incorporeal ones and their deed and gladness, it is the Gospel of God, the entrustment of the heart, the hope for salvation, it is a sing of cleanness, symbol of holiness, knowledge about God, the showing of the Baptism, the bath of the cleanness, the earnest of the Holy Ghost, the joy of Christ, the soul's gladness, the mercy of God, the ray of the mind's sun, morning star of the hearts, the strengthening of the Christendom, the showing of the reconciliation with God, grace of God, the wisdom of God, or, better said, the beginning of the self-wisdom of God, the showing of God, the thing of the hermits, the living of the hesychasts, occasion for appeasement, the proof of the angelic living. And what to mention all of them for? The prayer is God Who works all things in all people, for only one is the work, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost Who work all the things in Jesus Christ²³³.

114. If Moses hadn't taken the staff of the power from God, he wouldn't have become himself as god to Pharaoh, and he wouldn't have beaten the Pharaoh and Egypt. Likewise, if the mind didn't receive the power of the prayer, it would be impossible to it to crush the sin and the enemy powers.

115. They who say or do something without humbleness, they resemble to them who build during winter, or without bricks. And only a few find out that, and only a few know that by experience and knowledge. They who mumble words about it,

image of the bread and of the wine, there aren't only ideas about Him, but there are energies too, which He is present Himself within.

²³³ In the prayer of the right-believing Church it is comprised, in the state as cleaning fire and light and as a presence of the Bridegroom, the whole fructified and working content of the apostolic preaching; the prayer is the unmediated faith shown in its living, and not as expressed theoretically or in a mediated manner; in prayer, the confessed things are lived, the hoped things are present in their hypostasis, in their actual reality. The prayer is the clean movement of the mind towards God, like that of the angels; the prayer preaches, in a fiery mode and with working power, the Gospel of Christ; the prayer is the knowledge out of experience, about the power of God, and of the always active savior deeds of Christ. In prayer it is shown the fruit of the baptism. The prayer is the showing of God into power. The prayer is God Himself in His work within souls.

are like those who want to measure the bottomless deep²³⁴. But us, as some blind people, by using a little in a youngish manner, the imagination too, we are going to say about this great light: the humbleness isn't either humble speaking, nor it shows a humble countenance; the humble one doesn't force himself to think humbly, neither despises on himself by humbling himself, even if these ones are occasions and ways of the humbleness, as diverse countenance of the humbleness. The humbleness is grace and gift from above²³⁵. Like the Fathers say, there are two signs of the humbleness: to reckon yourself as bellow all others and to attribute to God your feats. The first one is the beginning, and the second one is the end. The humbleness comes within them who are searching for it, after they know and reckon within themselves these three: that they are more sinful than all people, that they are worse than all creatures, as ones who are contrary to nature, and that they are worthier to be wept for than the devils are, because they are servants to the devils. These ones feel themselves debtors to say: where do I know exactly the people's sins, what kind their sins are and how many? What do I know from that they surpass or equal my sins? And due to the nescience, oh, my soul, we are lower than all people, and we are under their feet, because we are dust and ashes (Gen. 18: 27). And how could I not be worse than all, since all the creatures are in their state according to the nature, as they have been created, while I, for my immeasurable lawlessness, I am in a state contrary to nature? Rightly so, both the beasts and the animals are cleaner than me, the sinner, and that's why I am beneath all of them, as one who has fallen into hell even before death, and I am laying there. But who doesn't know that the sinner is worse even than the devils, as their servant and obeying them, locked up, even from here, together with them, in

²³⁴ One lives the God's abyss in humbleness, and the humbleness too is by that, at its turn, and abyss, a look into the godlike abyss, with the help of God, through His benevolence or grace, that has been opened to the man, by making the man, through what he sees and feels, capable of humbleness. That's why neither God can be measured, nor the humbleness, as is measured the theoretical knowledge about God, and as it attempts to measure God by using its finite measures. The humbleness, by living God's abyss, it doesn't attempt to define God, as the cogitation always attempts.

²³⁵ The true humbleness isn't the product of the believer's will for humbleness. The believer, at most, he can show images of humbleness. The true humbleness is the gift from God, it is the opening of God to him who prays, it is a living relation with God. Only the open presence of the infinity of God, it truly overwhelms the soul and it makes the soul to truly humble himself, as the soul can never do it only by own efforts.

darkness? Rightly so, he who is mastered by devils he is worse than those. That's why you fill up the deep, together with them, you miserable! And if you dwell within hell and in the bottomless deep, together with them, even before your death, what do you deceive yourself for, you fool, and you call yourself as righteous, after you have become sinner and defiled and demon, through your evil deeds? Woe to your straying and to your delusion, you worshipper of the devils, you rabid dog, thrown, because of these, in fire and in darkness!

116. The power of the mental and clean and angelic prayer, it is – according to them who speak of God – wisdom moved by the Holy Ghost. Its sign is that the mind to look at itself, in time of prayer, totally without image, and the mind not to see either itself or anything else into thickness, but the mind to stop, often, even the senses under its light. This is for the mind becomes then immaterial and luminous, attaching itself to God in an untold manner, in order the mind to be a sole Ghost with God (1 Cor. 7: 17)²³⁶.

117. There are seven different tools which lead and guide one to the humbleness given – as a gift – by God. These seven tools uphold one another and they give birth to one another. These tools are: the silence, the humble cogitation, the humble speaking, the humble behavior, the self-reproaching, the crushing of the heart, and always staying the last in line. The silence into knowledge, it gives birth to humble cogitation. And out of humble cogitation are born the three manifestations of the humbleness: speaking humbly, behaving humbly, and self-reproaching. These three manifestations give birth to the crushing of the heart, that comes from being allowed, from

²³⁶ This is the light which the hesychasts were telling about, that they see it while they pray with the mind. Saint Gregory Sinaite affirms that this light means, in the same time, the absence of any image. Neither God is seen as an image, nor the mind receives an “image”, as it receives from things, or from the limited thoughts (a limited intellectual or moral image). The mind has become a borderless light, or the mind has found again its indefinite character, for it has been united with the limitless light of God. The paradoxical coincidence between light and the absence of image, it also consists of the fact that the mind is now living as pure and indefinite subject, but just by that, the mind knows itself as what it really is, namely non-narrowed objectually. The mind has been able to turn back to this state for the mind has encountered God in His quality as pure and undefinable Subject Who is role model and spring of power to the mind's quality, in order the mind to be a similar subject. The mind becomes, sort of speaking, coextensive and cointensive to God, but by His grace. The two subjects are so much united in love that they no longer know any separation between them. But the mind, by living on itself thus, the mind lives on itself as united with Him, in supreme evidence.

above, the temptations, which the fathers call it also as a punishment on good purpose (out of *oikonomia*) and humiliation form devils. And the crushing of the heart makes the soul to easily feel himself, with the deed, as lower than everyone and behind everyone and mastered by everyone. These two last manifestations bring the consummate and given by God humbleness, that is the power called by the fathers as the consummation of all virtues. The humbleness attributes the feats to God. So, before all, there is the silence, out of which is born the humble cogitation, and the humble cogitation gives birth to the three manifestations of the humbleness. The three ones give birth, them, to the one manifestation of the humbleness, that is the crushing of the heart. And this manifestation of the humbleness gives birth to the seventh one, one that is beneath all manifestations characteristic to the first humbleness. This is called by the fathers also as the humbleness out of *oikonomia*. And the humbleness out of *oikonomia*, it brings the humbleness given – as a gift – by God, that consummate, non-searched-for, and true humbleness. The first humbleness (the crushing of the heart) is born when the man is forsaken and defeated, crushed and mastered by all passions, so that, being him defeated in the thought and in the ghost, he will find no help from deeds or from God, or anywhere and from anybody, insomuch that he lacks only a little to reach desperation. If somebody isn't humble in all these aspects, he won't be able to break on himself and to reckon on himself as lower than anyone, and as the servant of anyone, and as worse even than the devils, as one who is persecuted and defeated by devils. This is the humbleness brought by the taking-care from God, out of *oikonomia*. Through this humbleness, it will be given a second and the highest humbleness, that is the godlike power that works and does all the things. Through this one, he always sees himself as the instrument of the godlike power, and he works through it the wonders of God.

118. It is impossible to find, in our time, the spiritual sight of the hypostatical light, a mind without hallucinations and scattering, a true work of the prayer that always springs out from the middle of the heart, a resurrection and stretching of the soul, a godlike awe and leaving from all the things from here, in flight, or a full ecstasy of the understanding out of senses with the Ghost, and the kidnapping of the mind out of its powers, and the angelic movement of the soul, directed and guided by God

towards limitlessness and height. This is because of forcedly reigning within us, today, of the passions, because of the multitudes of the temptations. The mind tarries into the easier things, and the mind hallucinates, before time, the aspects mentioned above. Thus, by losing even the little power give by God to it, the mind becomes dead in all concerns. That's why the mind, by using much right-reckoning, it must not search for the things of the time, before time, neither to throw away the things it has and to hallucinate other things. This is because of the tendency the mind has by its nature, to easily compose hallucinations related to the things mentioned before, and to forge contrivances about the things which the mind hasn't reached yet. That's why there is no little danger that one to deprive himself even of the things he has been given with, and often even to lose his mind, by letting himself to be deceived and by becoming a forger of hallucinations and not a hesychast (one that lives in quietude)²³⁷.

119. Not only the faith, but also the prayer that is worked and that works, both of them are grace. This is for the prayer manifests the true faith, one that has in itself the living of Jesus and that works and is worked by love into Ghost²³⁸. So, he who has no working love within himself, he has an opposite faith, one dead, one lifeless. Neither can be called as true believer, he who believes only with the simple word, and who doesn't manifest his faith as working through commandments, or into the Ghost. Therefore, one must show his faith as unveiled by his progress in deeds, or as working and lighting in the light of the deeds. This is for the Apostle says: "Show me your faith out of your deeds and I will show my deed out of my faith" (Jas. 2: 18). He shows here that the faith of the grace can be seen out of the deeds of the commandments, as also the commandments are

²³⁷ This is an allusion to some people who imagined that they saw images and a light like the material light, during prayer, because they were influenced by Messalians and Bogomils (Jean Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, p. 35. See also *The Life of Maximos Cavsovalivite*, written by Nephon, in *Analecta Bollandiana*, quoted no., p. 50). That light the hesychasts spoke about, it was imageless and immaterial, as Saint Gregory Sinaite said in the head no. 116, and even in the present head too (no. 118). Though he called it like hypostatical light, he understood by it the intense evidence irradiating out of the Person of Christ. They who hallucinate for themselves some material lights, they will be mastered by passions.

²³⁸ The Greek word *ενεργουμένη* has both passive and active meaning. Actually, this prayer is worked by the man too, but it also works as power of the Ghost, for not being produced only by man. As one that works, it has too a great transformative efficiency upon the soul. It is analogue to the faith that is stays in tight connection with.

worked and they lighten through the faith out of grace. This is for the faith is the root of the commandments, or, better said, the spring that waters them towards growth. That faith is divided in two: in confession and in grace, even if, by nature, it is undivided²³⁹.

120. The small and the big and the short ladder of them who live in obedience, it has five steps which lead them towards consummation. The first one is the rejection (forsaking), the second one is the submission, the third one is the obedience, the fourth one is the humbleness, and the fifth one is the love that is God. The rejection elevates from hell, him who lays in there and it sets free him who is enslaved by the material realities. The submission has found Christ and it serves to Christ, as Himself says: "He who serves Me, he follows Me, and where I am, there will be My servant too" (Jn. 12: 26). But where is Christ? He is sitting on the right hand of the Father (Rom. 8: 34). Consequently, there must be Christ's servant too, where Christ is to be served, setting his foot in order him to ascend, or ascending together with Christ's modes before him to reach there²⁴⁰. And the working obedience through commandments, it composes the ladder out of diverse virtues, and it places these virtues within the soul, as some steps (Ps. 83: 6²⁴¹). One, by being taken from upon these, by humbleness, the humbleness that elevated him, it will take him up to heavens, and it will

²³⁹ The confession belongs to the believer, while the grace belongs to God. Both of them compose the faith. Out of both of them there spring the deeds. That's why, in deeds it is shown the light of the faith, or of the faith and of the confession, or the power of God and of the man restored by grace back to his own power.

²⁴⁰ To ascend "together with Christ's modes (*τρόποι*), it means ascending together with the modes which Christ concretely accomplished the virtues in. This is for the virtues are, according to Saint Maximos the Confessor, the modes of actualization of the human rationality. Namely, he who wants to reach at the Father, where there is Christ, he must cross through obedience, humbleness, gentleness, death (sacrifice), resurrection, and elevation together with Christ. Only thus, one can reach the supreme stage of the deification and of the glory.

²⁴¹ In KJB we have: Ps. 84: 5-6: "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. // Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools."; in ROB we have: Ps. 83: 6-7: "Blessed is the man whose help if from You, Lord; he has placed ascensions in his heart, // In the valley of the crying, in the place that was placed to him. For blessing will give, The One Who places under the law," (We have given here two successive verses, in order the reader to notice the sheer difference between the two translations of the Bible from Greek (E. l. t's n.)).

surrender him to the love, that is the empress of the virtues²⁴², and it will present him before Christ. Thus, he who truly obeys himself, he will easily reach the heavens on the shortest ladder.

121. O shorter path towards the kingdoms from above, through the short ladder of the virtues, it is not else but the killing of the five passions which resist the obedience, namely the killing: of the disobedience, of the resisting by word, of the will to be pleasant to himself, of the self-justifying, and of the corrupting opinion about himself. This is because those ones are limbs and parts of the rebelled devil that swallow them who are liars amongst them who obey, and that sends them to the dragon from the deep. The disobedience is the mouth of the hell, the resistance by word is the hell's tongue, sharp like a sword; the pleasure for the self it is the hell's teeth sharpened on a grinder; the self-justification is the hell's bosom; and the self-opinion that sends to hell, it is the stench of the all moving hell's belly²⁴³. He who defeats the first one, through obedience, he will have cut all the other at once, and he will ascend quickly to heavens, on a sole step. A truly wonderful thing and amongst the most difficult to be encounter things, it is that our Lord has given us – as a gift – through his love for people that, through a sole virtue, namely through obedience, we can ascend to heavens before time, as through a sole disobedience we have descended or we will descend to hell.

122. They call the man as another world, one twofold and new, according to the godlike Apostle: "If there is somebody into Christ, he is new creation" (2 Cor. 5: 17). Actually, the man is created through virtue and he is called as sky and earth and as

²⁴² All the virtues are like the steps of a ladder towards heavens, towards deification. But the humbleness is beyond the continuity formed by virtues. The humbleness is an act of transformation of what the nature can achieve. An act performed upon nature by the grace of God, after the nature has ascended as higher as it could. In humbleness, there is no longer a y effort of the man. The humbleness is godlike. The humbleness is the greatest virtue, or it is beyond the human glories.

²⁴³ One must notice the internal connections identified by Saint Gregory Sinaite, between passions and the hell's steps, as an inverse ladder of the virtues which lead to heavens. The disobedience is the hell's mouth, because from it starts the hell of the breaking of man's connection with God and with his fellow humans, or the hell of the loneliness. The contradiction by word it is the sharp, thin, inventive, refined tongue in finding motives for contradiction and quarrel; he who justifies on himself, he swallows his chest with pride etc. The hell's steps are incorporated in the limbs of the chieftain subject of the demons. Himself incorporate the whole hell's content. The evil irradiates, in the first place, out of the personal centers of the demons and then of the evil people. The whole this gushing up of the evil from within them, it constitutes the hell. Thus, the hell has a personalistic character.

everything the world is. For the man are all the words and all the mystery, as the Theologian says²⁴⁴. For our fight isn't against blood and body, but it is against the principalities and against the masteries of the darkness of this eon, and against the ghosts of the evilness from the sky, and against the master of the sky (Eph. 2: 2; 6: 120, as the Apostle says, it is appropriate to reckon those who hiddenly wage war to our souly powers, as another great world of the nature. This is because the three chieftains who resist those who live in asceticism, they wage war to the three parts of the man. Each man is warred from that part that he works and advances from. The dragon, the chieftain of the deep, he uprises with war against those who have the taking heed at the heart, for he has his power directed towards the lust from the waist and from the belly-button. He sharpens against them, through the giant of the pleasant forgetfulness, the fiery power of the lit arrows (Eph. 6: 10); and by having the lust from within man as another sea and as another deep, he enters the lust and he crawls in it, and he muddies it up and he fills it with filth, and he makes it to boil (Job 41: 29)²⁴⁵. Then he ignites it

²⁴⁴ Every word is addressed to us. God wouldn't have spoken through the world and through Revelation if the man hadn't existed. God-the Word wouldn't have embodied Himself, by putting on a human body, if the man hadn't existed. It is for us the mystery of the fact that God talks to the creature, and for us too it is the mystery of the creature's deification. Without us, God would have remained an abyss of unrevealed mystery. All the godlike mysteries are unveiled through the word for us.

²⁴⁵ Here is being affirmed - contrary to the accusation that the hesychasts reckoned that the place of the heart is in the belly-button, and therefore they must direct their sight towards belly-button - that the belly-button is the center of the lust. Basil from Poiana Mărului, he rejected, at his turn, those malevolent accusations, in his *Foreword* to the writings of Gregory Sinaite and Philotheos Sinaite. What is being said here about the dragon that throws torrents of pleasures in the sea of the lust, it expresses, in spiritual terms, themes from the Byzantine painting rendering the hell (in the porch of the Orthodox churches). To the deep and to the swamp of the hell's lust, it corresponds the immeasurable abyss of the lust, and to this one it corresponds the dragon that pours torrents of muddy water into the lust. To the anger and to the wrath, it corresponds the master of this earthly world (different from the master of the sea of the lust), that injects passions of worldly mastery within them who let themselves to be influenced by him, but who can defeat him through the manly anger turned against him and against any fear of him. The angels, standing ready to reward with crowns on those who fight and who suffer from those who make themselves tools to this master, they are, mostly, represented in the icons of the martyrs. Finally, the master of the sky sends his attacks against that mind that occupies itself with the knowledge, and he urges that mind to forge ideas contrary to God, with high philosophies, with imaginings, for their baits themselves take the shape of "high" thoughts or of luminous hallucinations, in the material or intellectual meaning of the word. He commands the intellectual ghosts of the sky, of the pretended heights, detached from the earthly ghosts. Thus, the ghosts master, or they want to master the sea, the earth, and the sky, or the lust, the wrath, and the mind. They cannot reach higher than there,

towards matings and he floods it with torrents of pleasures, but he never fills it up, because it is insatiable. And the master of this world resists them who occupy themselves with the virtue through deeds, by fighting the wrath. By preparing to himself - through the giant of the laziness²⁴⁶ and of the carelessness²⁴⁷ - all the spells of the passions, he wages war in thoughts, to the wrath, as to another world, as in a theater or in a contest place, defeating or being defeated by them who always fight him manly, and he causes them crowns or shame before angels. He ceaselessly drives his armies against us, and he wages war to us. Finally, the master of the sky rushes upon those whose understanding occupies itself with the sight or with the contemplation, and he forges hallucinations, as one who is close to the rational and understanding side, together with the ghosts of the evilness from the sky. Through the giant of the nescience, he disturbs the cogitation that is directed upwards, as on another rational sky, and by placing before cogitation the contrivances and the hazy hallucinations of the ghosts, which he presents them, deceitfully, as some lightning bolts, storms, and loud bangs, so that he scares them. So, each one resists another, and they wage war through the three parts of the soul. And what is that one wages war through, by that too he wins²⁴⁸.

123. By being themselves minds, yore, and by falling off their incorporeality and thinness, each on them has achieved some material thickness, by receiving a body according to his purpose and work, which he is soaked with, and he works through that body. By losing they the angelic joy, as the man has lost it too, and by being them deprived of the godlike

for, higher than there, there is the heavens free of all of these: the heavens of the cleanness, of the humbleness, of the kindness, and of the real light or godlike knowledge, transcendent to creation that can be enslaved to the sin through the man's separation from God.

²⁴⁶ The master of the earth fights the wrath in order to gain it on his side, in order the wrath no longer to resist him. He does that by igniting the wrath for the worldly power, for defending it.

²⁴⁷ The idea about the three giants the laziness, the carelessness, and the nescience, it is taken from Mark the Ascetic, *Epistle towards Nicholas, The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 326. But here is being done a complex applying of the work of these three chieftains of the passions, by being placed in connection with the three powers of the soul and with the three parts of the creation.

²⁴⁸ Like the demons can win the three powers of the soul, in order to enslave them, by disfiguring them, likewise the demons can be defeated through those three powers, when those powers are kept in their use according to the nature, or when those powers are brought back to that state, by grace, and they are even strengthened through victory.

delectation, they suffer, as us suffer too, the earthly voluptuousness, because of having reached somewhat material, through the habits of the bodily passions. We must not wonder, therefore, if our soul too, created in the image of God, as rational and understanding, it has become beastly and insensitive and almost mindless, and no longer knowing God. This is because the habit transforms the nature, and it changes the work of the free will. Thus, some of the ghosts are material, heavy, difficult to calm down, angry and avenger, as some beasts eating of bodies, having their mouths open towards pleasure and voluptuousness, as some dogs licking blood and nourishing themselves on rotten and stinky things. They have as abode and loved delectation, the thick and material bodies. Others are fornicators and slobbery, as some leeches from the lust's swamp, as some frogs and snakes, sometimes changing themselves also in fish, and crawling towards the saltiness of the fornicating pleasure, that is their joy. By floating on the drinking's ocean, as ones which are slippery by nature, and which enjoy the moisture of the irrational parts, they always rise, within souls, waves of thoughts, or defilements, and of storms. Others too, they are light and thin, as some aerial ghosts. They blow into the contemplative part of the soul, and so they bring within it powerful winds and hallucinations. Sometimes they even take images of birds or of angels, in order they to deceive the soul. Also, they bring back the memories about some familiar persons and things, and to they transform and deviate, with the whole power, the whole spiritual sight, especially to them who are still fighting and they haven't reached yet the cleanness and the spiritual discernment. There is no spiritual thing whose image not to be stolen by them, unnoticeably, through hallucination. This is because, these too, they arm themselves according to the state and to the advancement of the attacked ones, by bringing straying instead of truth and hallucination instead of view, and by those they dwell into the souls. The Scripture confesses about those ones, when it speaks about the beasts of the plain, about the birds of the sky and about the crawling animals of the earth (Hos. 2: 14). Through those, the Scripture shows the ghosts of the evilness.

124. There are five ways which the uprising of the passions is born in us, and which the war of the body is stirred up in, against the soul. Sometimes, because the body uses wrongly the creatures (it abuses them); some other times,

because of attempting to work the things contrary to nature as they would be according to nature; some other times, again, the body is armed by devils, against the soul, because of being in a sweet friendship with those ones. But sometimes it happens that the body surrenders itself to disorders, because of being crossed through by passions. Finally, the war is stirred up also because of the envy of the devils, which have permission to resist us in order to humble us, when they do not succeed on any of the previously mentioned ways.

125. But the causes of the war are especially three and they are born out of all and through all: the habituation, the evil use of the things, and the envy and the war from the devils, consequently to the permission they are given. And the uprising or the war of the body against the soul and of the soul against the body (Gal. 5: 17), they show in the same manner, regarding the work and the habituation, either that is about the body's passions against the soul, or it is about the virtues of the soul against the body. And, on occasions, we are fought, daringly, by the enemy himself, without taking in account anything and without any cause, as a shameless that he is. So, my friend, do not give the starving leech the possibility to suck your veins. If you listen to this advice, that leech won't ever be able to vomit blood. Neither you cede earth to the snake and to the dragon, until they are fed up, and you will step easily over the haughtiness of the lion and of the dragon Ps. 90: 17²⁴⁹). You sigh, until, by disrobing yourself, you will be dressed up with the abode from above (2 Cor. 5: 2), as also with the countenance of Him Who has made you in the image of Jesus Christ (Col. 3: 10).

126. They who have become wholly bodily, and who have embraced the love for the self, they are slaves to the pleasure and to the vain-glory. Within them, there it has been rooted the envy. This is because, by being them melted down because of their envy, and by bitterly looking at the deeds of their neighbor, they gossip the good things as those would be evil things and fruits of the straying. They do not accept, neither they believe the things of the Ghost, and they cannot see or know either God, because of their little faith. Some people like those, because of their blindness and little faith, they will hear, rightly, being told

²⁴⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 91: 13: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."; in ROB we have: Ps. 90: 13: "Over asp and basilisk you will step and you will trample over lion and dragon." (E. l. t.'s n.)

to them: "I do not know you" (Mt. 25: 12). The believers who ask, he must either believe, when he hears the things which he haven't previously known, he must either learn the things he believes, or he must teach others the things he has known and to multiply, without envy, the talent, within them who receive it faithfully. If he doesn't believe the things which he doesn't know, and if he despises the things which he does not know, and he teaches other the things which he hasn't learnt himself, by envying them who teach those things with the deed, his share will be, doubtlessly, with those who have much venom of bitterness, and he will be together with those ones (Acts 8: 28).

127. Orator is, according to those who are really wise in their word, he who comprises, shortly, the things, through the general science, and he discerns and unites the things as a body, and he shows those things equally powerfully, according to their difference and unity. This is the orator who demonstrates. And spiritual speaker is him who discerns and unites the five general distinct features of the things, which the Word united, by embodying Himself, through the comprising word, through a certain quality of the voice, comprising, by being speaker, all the things. He teaches others not only through his simple word as proof, as they from outside, but he shows them also the views unveiled him about things, and so he can illuminate others too²⁵⁰.

And true philosopher is he who, out of creatures, the know the cause of the creatures, or, out of causes he knows the creatures, on the ground of the above-mind union and of his unmediated faith, consequently to which he not only learns, but he even experiences the godlike realities. Or, again, philosopher is especially him whose mind has reached that doing, that seeing, and that living according to God. But consummate philosopher is him whose mind has achieved the philosophy, of

²⁵⁰ Here Saint Gregory Sinaite uses the idea of Saint Maximos the Confessor about the five distinct and united in creation aspects, and which were re-strengthened in their unity in Christ: substance, time, place, power, and movement. But Saint Gregory ties this idea to the discernment he made between the orator who demonstrates the distinction and the union of the aspects of the world, and the spiritual speaker who lives their distinction and unity in Christ. The spiritual speaker contemplates or he sees, spiritually, what he communicates. His speech is comprising not by its logical connection amongst words, which expresses the rational connection amongst things, but through itself the quality of his voice that is influenced by the experience of the union with Christ and by the unity of all things in Christ.

better said the moral, natural, and theological philotheos²⁵¹, by learning out of the moral one, the deeds, out of the natural one, the rationalities, and out of the theological one, the sight and the exactness of the dogmas²⁵². Or, again, godlike word in the godlike realities is him who proves the realities which are in an existing manner (the uncreated realities) and the realities which are in a simple manner (the created realities), from the realities which do not exist, and he shows the rationalities of the first ones out of the rationalities of the last ones. And out of the rationalities of these ones, he sees the rationalities of those ones, through godlike instillations; and the world that is known with the mind and unsee, he knows it out of the world that is submitted to the senses and seen, as that one submitted to the senses and seen out of that one unseen and unsubmitted to the senses, by comparing to one another, the seen one as an image of the unseen one, and the unseen one as archetype of the seen one. They have been put together, he says, the images of the imageless realities and the shapes of the shapeless realities²⁵³. This is for this one is spiritually known through that one, and that one is known through this one, and each of them can be limpidly seen in another and it can be expressed through the

²⁵¹ We are not sure about the equivalence we have chosen here, in order to translate the Romanian word, as spelled by Saint Dumitru the Restorer of the Christian theology: *filothea*, a word that would mean “love-for-God”. (E. I. t.’s n.)

²⁵² True philosopher is him who doesn’t remain only on creatures’ level, but he ascends, through that above-mind union with that cause, and through the unmediated faith, namely that faith based on or verified through the unmediated experience of the believed One. That one is true philosopher for he has united himself, through experience, with the Person out of Whom springs the whole wisdom, but Who is above any understanding. Such philosopher is not only taught by somebody else about the godlike realities, but he even experiences those realities, namely those realities are imposed him, as a reality that isn’t produced or invented by him. True philosopher is him who has achieved the wisdom in his deeds, in his contemplation, and in his living. When somebody lacks something of these things, that one won’t be a true philosopher, because of not having the whole wisdom, or his wisdom isn’t made whole out of all modes of activity. True philosopher is rather a Philotheos, namely one who loves God, for the wisdom he loves it is the endless, living, of-live-giver, and wholly hypostatized in the Supreme Person of the Word of God. That’s why the love for the true wisdom (philo-sophia) it is rather called as philo-theos (love for God).

²⁵³ The realities having images, they can be means which the imageless realities can be known as archetypes through. This is for in the Imageless realities are potentially given the uncreated ones. That’s why, through those ones having images, we must cross through them to what it is beyond image, as foundation of the image. In the countenance of a person, we must live what is above that person’s countenance, but it has the virtuality of that person’s countenance. Only thus we can ascend to Him Who is beyond the non-image organically tied to the created person.

world of the truth. There is not need to give and images to the knowledge of the truth, which lightens like the sun, through farer or allegorical words, and the rationalities of the truth of both of them can be proven and clarified in the clearest possible mode, through science and spiritual power, and the another, as eternal, godlike, and become manifest to us²⁵⁴.

And godlike philosopher is him who has united himself through deeds, and who sees God in an unmediated manner, and who has reached and who calls himself as God's friend, as one who loves the prime, doer, and true Wisdom, more than any other friendship, wisdom, and knowledge²⁵⁵. And philologist (loving the word) and actual philosopher (even if the common opinion, by stealing the name of philosophy has forgotten about this, as the great Gregory says) it is him who loves and who studies the wisdom from here of the creation of God, as its last echo, but he doesn't occupy himself with this philosophy with pride, for human praise and glory, in order him not to love the material things, but in order him to love the wisdom of God, as shown in nature and in the nature's movement.

And scholar is him who has learnt the realities of the Kingdom of God, namely everyone who occupies himself, through deed, with the seeing (contemplation) God, and who persevere in quietude (hesychia). This one brings out of his heart's treasury new and old (Mt. 13: 52), namely evangelical and prophetic teachings, or out of the New and the Old Testaments, either things of teaching or of doing, or teachings of the Law and apostolical teachings. This is for these ones are the new and old mysteries, which the doer scholar unveils them, by learning that living that is pleasant to God. Scholars are everyone who occupy themselves with the knowledge of the

²⁵⁴ Our transcendent foundation, that bear within itself, imageless, our image, it is, in the same time, the ultimate and the most intimate house which we will reach in the future life into. It is our most intimate house and it is our hearth. It is called as house for it is the first departure place and the last and eternal place, and we feel in it as at home, more at home than anywhere else, having the whole warmth and familiarness of the most-own our house. It has a familiar warmth, for this house is the Supreme Person where we have our origin and our full love at. This home is God-the Word.

²⁵⁵ Loving the wisdom means loving God, the Wisdom with a face of Person, the hypostatized or hypostatical Wisdom. Only the Person God has concentrated in Himself the endless, living, active, loving, and benefactor wisdom. Only such a Wisdom, you can love it as a Friend, for that Wisdom loves you as a friend too. The friendship from that Wisdom exceeds any friendship, as our friendship for that Wisdom does it too. Out of that Wisdom springs the whole our wisdom and friendship.

nature, and who stays in the middle of the knowledge and of the things' rationalities and who prove everything into ghost through the discerning power of the rationality. Finally, true philosopher is him who has in himself in a non-mediated manner and into knowledge, that above-nature union with God²⁵⁶.

128. They who write and speak without Ghost, wanting to erect the Church, they are souly, as the godlike Apostle says somewhere, because of not having Ghost (Jude 19). Some like these ones are submitted to the curse that says: "Woe to them who are sapient in their own eyes and taught before themselves" (Isa. 5: 21). This is because "they speak from themselves and it is not the Ghost of God Who speaks within them", according to the word of the Lord (Mt. 10: 20). They who speak out of their thoughts, before cleaning their taught, they have been deceived by the ghost of the self-appreciation. About people like these the proverb says: "I saw a man reckoning in himself that he is wise, but the insane has more hope than this one" (Prov. 24: 12). And the Wisdom tells us: Do not be wise by yourselves" (Prov. 3: 7). But, also the godlike Apostle, he who was full of Ghost, he confessed, saying: "We are not clever from ourselves, but our cleverness is from God" (2 Cor. 3: 5), or: "But speaking as from God, before God, into Christ" (2 Cor. 2: 17). And their words are unpleasant and non-lighted. This is because they do not speak while being imparted with the living spring of the Ghost, but they speak out of a heart that is like a stinky puddle, where there are feeding the leeches, the snakes, and the frogs of the lusts, of the haughtiness, and of the lack of

²⁵⁶ The first rows illustrate a gradation between the godlike: scholar, speaker, and philosopher. It is about the usual gradation of the spiritual life: the doer, the knower of the godlike rationalities out of nature, and he who unites himself with God in a unmediated and above-nature manner. At the real knowledge, namely at the knowledge of the godlike rationalities, one cannot reach before the cleaning through deeds, because the passionate man doesn't see, at all, the godlike rationalities, or he crooks them because of his passions; and one cannot reach the unmediated union with God without the cleaning through deeds, or without distinctively knowing God's rationalities out of creature.

"Scholar" can mean here also writer (γραμματέυς). This one writes the basic laws of the spiritual life, within himself, through deeds. The speaker of the knower of the rationalities from within world, they acknowledge these rationalities and they communicated them to other people too. And he who loves the wisdom (the philosopher) ascends above these two steps, to the union with Person God, the spring of the spiritual laws and of the rationalities-words of the world, which God challenges us to cogitate Him through, and us to answer the cogitation and the words which He addresses us, in order to develop us as rightly-cogitating beings and as responsibly-speaking beings, so that He develops us in accordance to Him.

restraint. The water of their knowledge is muddy and badly stinking, and stale. They who drink that water they will get sick, they will get nausea, and they will throw up.

129. "We are the body of Christ and limbs (each one) in part", says the godlike Apostle (1 Cor. 12: 27). Or again: "One body and one ghost you are, as you have been called" (Eph. 4: 4-5). So, like the body without ghost is dead and insensitive (Jas. 2: 25), likewise the ones killed by passions, because of disregarding the commandments after the Baptism, he becomes unworking and unilluminated by the Holy Ghost and by the grace of Christ. He has the Ghost by faith and by rebirth, but he is unworking and motionless because of his souly death. This is because, by being the soul one, and the body's limbs being many, the soul makes them alive and the soul moves them in state of life. But the limbs which are withered because of some haphazard helplessness, the soul bears them as such as dead and motionless, while those limbs still remain lifeless and insensitive²⁵⁷. Likewise, the Ghost of Christ is entirely unmixed in all the limbs of Christ, and it keeps in working and it makes alive the limbs which can be imparted with life; but the Ghost of Christ keeps also the limbs which are helpless to be imparted with life, with love for the people, as His own. That's why, any believer is imparted, through faith, with the adoption into Ghost, but he can become unworking and unilluminated, because of carelessness and faithlessness, being deprived of the light and of the life into Christ. So, any believer is a limb of Christ and has the Ghost of Christ, but he can be unworking, motionless, and incapable of being shared with the grace²⁵⁸.

130. There are eight general views. We say that the first one is regarding God Who is shapeless, without beginning, uncreated, Cause of all realities, the threefold-one and above-being Godhead; the second regard the world of the heavenly powers; the third is directed towards the composition of the

²⁵⁷ Here is being given an explanation to the fact that, though the grace of the Baptism remains within the baptized one, his souly and bodily limbs can be unworking, in a spiritual meaning, because of not appropriating within them, and because of not fructifying the power of the grace. This explanation uses the fact which the soul remains within the body's limbs like, and, somehow, the soul keeps the palsy limbs still alive, though they remain as dead and unworking.

²⁵⁸ Here is being specified the meaning of the positive motion which Saint Maximos the Confessor spoke so insistently of, as a road of the creature towards the consummation into God. That positive motion is the true sign of the real life. The natural motion is only the basis and the precondition of this positive motion strengthened and guided through the Ghost.

things; the fourth one is directed towards the descent, for oikonomia, of the Word; the fifth is directed towards the general resurrection; the sixth towards the fearsome second coming of Christ; the seventh towards the eternal torments; and the eighth towards the Kingdom of Heavens. The first four are the past and accomplished ones. And the other four, are the future ones and not shown yet. These ones are seen in a far light and they are found by them who have achieved, by grace, much cleanness of their mind. And he who comes close to them without light, let him know that he will contrive hallucinations and not views, because of being deceived by the ghost of hallucinations and by hallucinating through that one.

131. We need to speak, according to our power, also about deceit, that is, to many, a very cunning and contriving trap, one difficult to know and to understand. The deceit, he says, it is shown, or, better said, it comes upon the man on two ways: through hallucination and through taking in mastery, thought it has a sole beginning and a sole cause: the pride. The first one is the beginning of the second one. And the second one is the beginning of the third one, by getting one out of his minds. This is because, the beginning of the seeing by hallucinations, it is the self-appreciation, and that makes one to imagine God as a certain shape. Out of this it follows the deceit through hallucination towards deception; and out of this is born the blasphemy. In the same time with this, the deceit through hallucination gives birth to the fear of strange apparitions during vigil and sleep, which some call it as fear and tremble of the souls. So, the pride is followed by deceit; the deceit is followed by blasphemy; the blasphemy is followed by fear; the fear is followed by tremble; and the tremble is followed by the getting out of one's minds (insanity)²⁵⁹.

This sort of delusion through hallucination it is the first one. And the second one, that one through doing, it is this: it has its beginning in the love for pleasure, that is born out of the so-called natural lust. Out of pleasure is born the debauchery of the untold uncleanness. And this one, by igniting the whole nature and by disturbing the cogitation through the union with

²⁵⁹ These ones are some precursors of today's spiritism. Everything comes out of the man's pride, that he can know, while unpurified and without humbleness, the mysteries of God and of the future life, by giving images to which is imageless. At the beginning he willingly gives images to those realities, but later on, such images are unwillingly imposed to him, as some hallucinations.

the desire images, it gets the mind out of itself, by making the mind, through the drunkenness of the fiery work, to become delusional, and to issue liar prophecies, and it will pretend to be imparted with the sight of some saints and with their words, as those ones would be unveiled through a mind that is drunken to satiation with passion, a mind that has changed its way of being by becoming devilish. Some people like those, by being deceived by the people living into world, through the deceit of the delusion, they are called as “souls” (spirits?). They sit next to the graves of some saints and they reckon themselves as instilled and moved by those saints, and forced by them to herald the people things about those saints. But we rather must call such people as deviled and strayed and enslaved to delusion, and not prophets or foretellers of the present and future things. This is because, the devil of the debauchery itself, by darkening their cogitation through the fire of the voluptuousness, it drives them out of their minds, by hallucinating them certain saints, and dialogues with those, and it shows them views. This is because, by taking them to the yoke of the Belial, he hurries up to push them to delusion, in order to have them surrendered, until death, and to send them to the eternal damnation²⁶⁰.

132. One must know that the delusion has three general causes which it comes upon people through: the pride, the envy of the devils, and the advising permission (of God). And the causes of the first ones are: the pride, the light-mindedness, the envy, the increase; and the cause of the advising permission is the sinful living. The delusion because of envy, and the self-appreciation, they will find a quick healing, especially when the man humbles himself. But being one let at the hand of satan, because of his sins, God often allows it until that one's death, towards cleanness. Sometimes God allows to be tormented, towards salvation, even the innocent ones. But one must know that the devil of the self-appreciation makes prophecies within them who do not take heed at their heart.

133. All the right-worshippers are anointed priests and emperors into truth by renewal, as those from yore were

²⁶⁰ It is to be noticed the fact that Saint Gregory sees the cause of the willing hallucinations, and of the unwilling hallucinations, as not being only the pride, but also as being the bodily addiction to pleasures. This is because, the bodily addiction to pleasures, it usually pushes towards imagining the spiritual things, because of being unable to detach oneself from imaginings.

anointed through fore-imagining. This is for those ones were images of our truth who fore-imagined us not individually, but all of us together. But our kingdom and priesthood are not of the same kind as it was theirs, through the symbols are the same. Neither are different, at us, the nature, the grace, and the calling to be anointed, in order to make the anointed ones special, but we have one and the same calling, faith, and imprinting. They show and the unveil, according to the word of the truth, that we have to become clean, dispassionate, and totally dedicated to God, now and in the age to come²⁶¹.

134. The wisdom spring out of mouth, while the understanding springs out of the heart's cogitation (Ps. 43: 4²⁶²) of him who has known the word of God. And that is the hypostatical Wisdom of God-the Father, the hypostatical Wisdom makes Himself known out of things, to him who looks at the rationalities from things²⁶³. That one speaks with the wisdom's mouth out of Wisdom, through the living and working word, by being illuminated within his heart by the power of the understanding that transforms him through the Ghost. Consequently, he can illuminate the believers too, who listen to him with understanding²⁶⁴.

²⁶¹ Through renewal, Saint Gregory Sinaite understands, the Mystery of the Anointment. He is affirming here the general priesthood of the believers. That is a true priesthood, and not only a fore-imagined one, a symbolic one, as in the Old Testament. And not only the priesthood, but also the imperial dignity. And there are not degree differences. Through this priesthood, he understands the union of everyone with Christ, on the same measure, through the prayer of the heart. This doesn't make useless, the priesthood appointed to the Liturgy and to the Mysteries committed in seen manner, in order all believers to be nourished with the necessary grace of the inward union with Christ.

²⁶² The mentioned psalm's content doesn't correspond to the mentioned idea; in KJB we have: Ps. 44: 3: "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them."; in ROB we have: Ps. 43: 4-5: "Because not with their sword they have inherited the land and their arm didn't deliver them, // But Your right hand and Your arm and the illumination of Your face, for You deigned into them." (E. l. t.'s n.)

²⁶³ The rationalities of the things suppose a person of supreme wisdom who cogitate those rationalities. And that supreme person not only cogitate the things, be that supreme person imprints his thought and his words on the created things, as some seals, so that that supreme person places on things the sign that the things belong to that supreme person.

²⁶⁴ The godlike wisdom that speaks through the mouth of the one who sips out of the godlike wisdom, it is the supreme hypostatical Wisdom Itself, or the Person of God-the Word. That's why It is alive and working and its word, by becoming the word of him whom It speaks through, it is, at its turn, living and working. This hypostatical Wisdom illuminate the heart of him who has united himself with It.

135. The delusion, the great enemy of the truth, today is attracting people towards perdition. It gives birth to the nescience of the darkness, that has been imprinted in the souls of the lazy ones²⁶⁵, because of their estrangement from God. These ones argue that there is no God Who has born us anew and Who has illuminated us, or they believed to God and they know God only through simple word and not with the work, or they say that God showed Himself only them who live yore, and not to us too. They blaspheme the faith in God, by reckoning the witnesses of the Scripture about God as simple opinion and they deny the awe that follows out of knowing God. They read the Scriptures only bodily, not to say Jewishly, and that's why they deny the resurrection of the soul, because of wanting to dwell, unconsciously, un graves. This delusion has as causes three passions: the faithlessness, the cunningness, and the idleness. Besides, these ones are born out of one another and they uphold each other. This is because the faithlessness is the teacher of the cunningness, and the cunningness accompanies the idleness. Or, vice versa: the idleness is the mother of the cunningness, as the Lord says: "Cunning and lazy servant" (Mt. 25: 16); and the cunningness is the mother of the faithlessness. And the ones who doesn't' believer, they won't fear either God. And this gives born to idleness, that is the mother of the contempt, which the whole good is disregarded through, and which the whole evil is done through.

136. The true faith about God and the non-liar knowledge about creatures, they compose the consummate Orthodoxy of the dogmas. That's why one like this one, he owes to worship like this: "Glory to You, our God, glory to You; for, for us the Word embodied Himself, He Who is above being. That's why great is the mystery of Your oikonomia, You the Savior of ours, glory to You!".

137. According to great Maximos, there are three kinds of written words which aren't condemned neither despised: the first are those written for own memory; the second ones are those written for the use of other people; and the third kind of words are those written out of obedience. Due to these reasons

²⁶⁵ It is about them who are lazy in fulfilling the commandments. Those ones have estranged themselves from God and that's why they have been darkened. They no longer want to know about God, because of fearing the eternal punishment that will be caused to them by not fulfilling the commandments.

were composed most of the writings, by them who humbly searched for the word. And he who writes about virtues in order to be pleasant to people, or in order to be noticed and for achieving glory from people, that one will take his reward, by not benefitting anything here and by not achieving any rewards in the age to come, but he will be condemned as one who has brought the word of God out on a stall, in order to sell it and to gain, cunningly, the pleasure from people.

Other Heads of the Same One²⁶⁶

1. Everyone who is baptized in Christ, he owes to reach all the ages of Christ. This is because he received, from before, the power for those ages, and he can find them out and he can appropriate them through commandments²⁶⁷. The earnest of the Ghost is the conceiving; the feeling of the joy is the birth; the cleaning power of the Ghost's fire is the baptizing; the seeing of the godlike light is the transfiguration; the killing towards everything, it is the crucifixion; the dwelling of the godlike love within heart, it is the burial; the life-maker watchfulness of the Ghost, it is the resurrection; the ecstasy and the kidnapping of the mind towards God, they are the ascent²⁶⁸. And he who hasn't found these ones, he still is a child both in his ghost and in his body, even if he is reckoned by everyone as having grey hair and being worker.

2. The sufferings of Christ comprise the life-making killing of them who have crossed, with the suffering, through everything. And if we suffer together, we will also be glorified together (Rom. 8: 17). And the passions of the pleasures bring a death-making killing to them who work the passions. The

²⁶⁶ In *The Greek Philokalia* there are 7 heads, in other manuscripts there are only 5. The last two heads are given in the Ghenoiu manuscript, towards the end, before the dialogue with Maximos the Cavesite (pp. 133-135). Likewise seems to be the case with the manuscript of the Romanian Academia no. 73, 3 and 17. We are going to give here only the first 5 heads, in the order they are given in *The Greek Philokalia*.

²⁶⁷ This idea will be reiterated by Nicholas Cabasilas in *The Life of Christ*. And Gregory Sinaite took this idea from Maximos the Confessor, from *Ambigua*, But the first issuer of this idea was Saint Apostle Paul (Eph. 4: 13).

²⁶⁸ The stages of the spiritual life correspond to the moments from the life of our Savior, which aren't, at their turn, lacking corresponding inward states. The burial is the love for God, for in it we admit to no longer be seen, by totally renouncing to ourselves, for God. The resurrection, ad continuous standing, it is shown in watchfulness.

willing suffering of the sufferings of Christ means the crucifixion of the crucifixion and the killing of the killing²⁶⁹.

3. Suffering for Christ means enduring the troubles happening to us. This is for, to the innocent, the envy is beneficial; and the rebuking becomes to us an advice from God, in order to turn us back, and opening our ears, because we are guilty (Isa. 4: 5). That's why, the Lord promised them who endure, crown for ever and ever (Jas. 1: 12). Glory to you, our God, glory to You, Holy Trinity, for everything, glory to You!

About the Passionate Transformation

4. The idleness, because of being a difficult to defeat passion, it makes our body drowsy. And because of becoming our body drowsy, together with the body the soul becomes drowsy as well. And because of becoming both of them weak, the admixture of the body's juices is transformed through the addiction to pleasures. And the addiction to pleasures stirs up the lust; the lust gives birth to burning; the burning causes the uprising; the uprising moves the memory; the memory causes the hallucination; the hallucination brings the bait; the bait brings the accompanying (with the thought); the accompanying gives room to approval; and the approval commits the deed, either through the body, or through the touches of many sorts. And thus, the defeated man falls²⁷⁰.

²⁶⁹ He who wants to reach the total killing of his passions, and he receives the power to do that out of the Lord's sufferings, he must have advanced, in the first place, gradually, in suffering, or in killing his passions. One must notice here the two meanings of the passions: passions of pleasure which kill our being and passions (sufferings) of pain which kill our passions of pleasure and which bring our being to the true life. The passions of pleasure – or killer of our being - are being killed through the passions (sufferings) of pain which bring us the true life. In this meaning, there is a death-making killing, one caused by the passions of pleasure, and there is a life-making killing, one brought us by the passions (sufferings) of pain. Thus, appropriating, willingly, the passions (sufferings) of pain, of Christ, it causes us a crucifixion of the crucifixion, and a killing of the killing caused by the passions of pleasure. All of this it has been taken from Saint Maximos the Confessor, whose influence upon Gregory Sinaite can be seen also in the fact that Saint Maximos the Confessor, together with John Climacus, they are the only ones quoted by Sinaite in the head no. 137 after acrostic.

²⁷⁰ Yore, we know the four elements leading to sin: the baith of a thought, the accompanying of the baith in thought (dialogue), the consenting to deed, and the deed itself. Gregory Sinaite is mentioning here even more moments preceding the baith.

About the Good Transformation

5. Being patient in everything, it gives birth to manhood; the manhood gives birth to resoluteness; the resoluteness gives birth to perseverance; the perseverance produced the prolongation of the thing, or the adding to the thing; the prolongation appeases the body's lack of restraint and it calms down the addition of the lust to pleasure. And the lust awakens now the longing; and the longing awakens the love; and the love awakens the zeal; and the zeal awakens the warmth; and the warmth awakens the moving to work; the moving awakens the zeal; the zeal awakens the prayer; the prayer awakens the appeasing; the appeasing gives birth to the sight; the sight gives birth to knowledge; the knowledge gives birth to the understanding of the mysteries; and the end of the mysteries is the knowledge of God (the theology). And the fruit of the knowledge of God is the consummate love; the fruit of the love is the humbleness; the fruit of the humbleness is the dispassion; the fruit of the dispassion is the fore-seeing, the prophesizing, and the fore-knowing. But no one has, while still being here, the consummate virtues, neither can diminish his sin at once. But, by slowly advancing with the virtue, his sin will go, step by step, to inexistence²⁷¹.

²⁷¹ We aren't going to give here also the other two heads following in *The Greek Philokalia*, due to the motives we have already mentioned above.

Of the Same One:

Detailed teaching about appeasement and prayer, about the signs of the grace and of the deceit; and then, about the difference between warmth and work; and that without an adviser there comes easily the delusion. (Head in *The Greek Philokalia*: 10; here we have 14 heads).

1. We should say, you honored Longinus, according to the great Teacher, that we don't even need the help from the Scriptures (1 Thes. 4: 4), or of the other fathers, but we are taught by God. "Because there will be, he says, all of them taught by God" (Isa. 54: 13; Jn. 7: 45). We are taught thus, so that we to know from Him the useful things. And not only us, but each one amongst believers, as ones who bear that holy law of the Ghost written on the tablets of our hearts (2 Cor. 3: 3), and we have been found worthy of speaking, in an unmediated manner, and unusually, like the cherubs do, to Christ, through the clean prayer. But because of still being us little children, during our rebirth anew, and we do not know either the grace and we cannot see our renewal either, and because we do not even know the overwhelming honor of the glory which we have been imparted with, and for we owe to grow up, spiritually and souly, through commandments, and to see with our mind what we have received, because of our carelessness, and because of the all-passionate addiction, many of us will fall down into callousness and darkness²⁷². So that we no longer know even if there is God, neither who we are, nor what we have reached to be, after we will have been made sons of God and sons of the light, children and limbs of Christ. Even if we are baptized when we are grown up men, we still feel ourselves only as baptized

²⁷² Saint Gregory Sinaite affirms, at his turn, the need for a certain surpassing of the state of childhood from Baptism, for the believers to feel the grace and their renewal as effect of the grace. He belongs, by that, to the line developed by Makarios, Mark the Ascetic, Diadochus, and Simeon the New Theologian. This isn't a singular teaching belonging to Saint Simeon the New Theologian, as some Occidental theologians affirmed about it. The "sight of the mind", or the: "understanding seeing" isn't only a simple rational deduction, but it is evidence of the reality of God, a spiritual feeling of the connection with Him.

with water, and not into Ghost. And through we doubt about Ghost, we believe that only by the simple faith that is dead, and not by the working faith; and we believe that only into doubt. Thus, by totally being us bodies, we live and we walk bodily. And if we do not repent ourselves, we will know and we will fulfill the commandments only bodily, but not spiritually. And if, after many toils, the grace makes some of us worthy to manifest themselves with love for people, we reckon the grace as deceit. And if we hear about the grace that it works within others, because of our envy, we reckon the grace as delusion. And so, we will remain dead until our death, by not-living and by not-working into Christ.

That's why, according to the Scripture, at the time of the exit, or of the judgment, it will be take away from us even what we will have, because of our faithlessness and of the despair (Mt. 25: 29). We do not understand that the sons must be together with the Father, gods out of God, and spiritual out of Ghost. This is for, "what is born out of Ghost, ghost it is" (Jn. 3: 6). But we are bodies, despite we have become believers and heavenly; that's why the Ghost of God doesn't remain within us (Gen. 7: 3). That's why the Lord allowed the misfortunes, the enslavements, and the slaughters to multiply, that, maybe through them, Him to correct, or to heal, as through some more stronger medicines.

2. First, it must be said, through the word given by God them who preach the Gospel, how somebody can find out (better said, he finds out what he already has) that he has received Christ through Baptism into Ghost. This is for the Apostle says: "Don't you know that Christ Jesus dwells within your hearts?" (2 Cor. 13: 15). Then it must be said how he could advance and how he could keep what he has found. This is for many fought that fight until they found what they were looking for, and then they stopped the fight there. They didn't advance any longer, neither they took care, for they were satisfied with the beginning that they found. And by being impeded and by stopping themselves on their way, they still imagined that they were walking on the good way, though they were carried away, without any achievements, and outside the good way. Others reached the middle of the illumination, but they weakened their advancing towards the target, because they became lazy and they turned themselves back to their things from before, by living carelessly, and so they became beginners again. Finally,

others, after reaching the consummation, they fell again, because of not taking heed, because of the self-appreciation, and they turned themselves back to the things from before, and they became like them who were in the middle, or even beginners in their work. This is for the beginners have the work, the ones from the middle they have the illumination, and the consummate ones they have the cleanness of the soul, or the resurrection²⁷³.

About the Way One Can Find the Word

3. One can find the work of the Ghost – that we received it before, mysteriously, through baptism –; first, as Saint Mark says, the gift is unveiled, generally speaking, by working the commandments, with much tiredness, and in time²⁷⁴. The more we work the commandments, the more the gift makes its rays brother within us. Then it is shown through the ceaseless and conscious calling upon our Lord Jesus, namely through the remembrance of God, into obedience. Through the first way of living, it will become manifest a little slower; through the second way of living, it will become manifest a little quicker. It is like one finds the gold, if he digs the earth tiresomely and perseveringly. So, if we want to find out and to know the truth without delusion, we will try to have only the work from within our heart, totally imageless and shapeless, and we won't mirror within us, by hallucination, any shape or any image reckoned as belonging to the saints, neither will we look at lights (because the deceit uses, especially at the beginning, to deceive the mind of the inexperienced ones, with such liar hallucinations). Let's strive ourselves to have without our hearts only the work of the prayer, one that warms up the mind and it

²⁷³ While Dionysus the Areopagite reckons the lowest stage as being the cleanness, the second stage being the illumination, and the third stage being the consummation, Saint Gregory Sinaite is attributing here, the cleanness to consummation, and on the lowest stage he is placing the work. This work is that doing which the sins are cleaned through, and which the virtues are achieved through. The illumination is one with the contemplating the godlike rationalities from within creatures. And the leanness from on the highest stage it is the achieved dispassion, that is one with the union with God. But in the next head Saint Gregory Sinaite is going to present the work as having a much richer content. The doing, it is already a fire of the gladness and of-a-good-fragrance light, within beginners.

²⁷⁴ Saint Mark the Ascetic, *About Baptism, The Romanian Philokalia*, Volume I, p. 274 and the followings.

gladdens the mind, and that ignites our soul towards the untold love for God and for people. That's why, it will remain as it is - if the prayer is at the beginners – the understanding and always in motion work of the Holy Ghost, being born out of prayer, out of humbleness, and out of not little crushing of the heart, dawning up, at the beginning, from within heart, as a fire of the gladness, and at the end, as one of-well-fragrance light²⁷⁵.

4. And they who truly search for the light, and not like those who only spy on it, according to the same wisdom that says “it is found by them who do not spy on it” (Wisdom of Sirach 1: 2²⁷⁶), the signs of the beginning are these ones: in some of them it is shown as a dawning light; in others like a full of tremble gladness; in others, again, like a joyfulness; and in others, like a joy mixed with fear; in others, like a tremble and joy; sometimes, in others, as tears and fear. Because the soul rejoices the visit and the mercy of God, but the soul fears and trembles for His coming, as guilty of many sins. To others, it appears like a beginning of untold crushing of the heart and an untold pain of the soul, and the soul suffers like a woman in labors, as the Scripture says (Apoc. 12: 2). This is for the “living and working Word”, namely Jesus, he “crosses, as the Apostle says, to the separation of the soul and of the body, of the joints and of the marrow” (Hebr. 3: 12), in order Him to melt down, powerfully, that what is passion, from within all the parts of the soul and of the body. In other it is shown like a love and as a peace towards all people. In others, like a gladness often called by the Church Fathers as *jump*, for being a power of the Ghost and a movement of the living heart. This is also called as flinching and sight of the Holy Ghost Who prays for us in an untold manner, to God (Rom. 8: 26). Isaiah called this as *pregnancy of the godlike righteousness* (Isa. 45: 8), and the great Ephraem called it *penetration*. Our Lord called it as spring of life jumping towards the eternal life (Jn. 4: 14), (and by water He

²⁷⁵ Saint Greogry Sinaite, as other previous Fathers, he unites in the description of the godlike gifts, also sides which we aren't used to see as joined into the natural life: of-well-fragrance light. These are spiritual states of an unusual complexity. This can be seen also in the following heads (4-5). But starting with the head no. 3, he has started to pass from describing the spiritual state of the beginners, to describing the state of them who have reached the superior stages.

²⁷⁶ This Book isn't given in the content of King James Bible. The interested reader can find it in our English translation, on www.academia.edu, grouped under the title *Bible Missing Texts*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

meant the Ghost), that jumps up within our heart and boils with great power.

5. One must know that the jumping or the gladness are of two kinds: the peaceful one, that is also called as jumping and as sigh and as prayer of the Ghost, and there is also the big one, that is called as jumping and as jump and as leap, that is an intense flying of the heart towards the godlike sky. This is for the soul, by being winged with love, by the godlike Ghost, and by being the soul freed from the ties of the passions, the soul tries to fly towards the realities from above, even before exit, because of wanting to part with this burden. This state is called also shaking and boiling of the Ghost, and trouble, according to the word: "Jesus was troubled in His Ghost, shaken powerfully, and He said: where did you put him?" (Jn. 11: 34). The difference between the big and the little jumping, it is also shown by the godlike David, when saying: "The mountains jump up like rams, and the hills like the lambs" (Ps. 113: 4²⁷⁷). He speaks about the consummate ones, and about beginners, for it would have been inappropriate him to say about mountains and hills that they had jumped, because these ones are lifeless.

But one must know that the godlike fear won't have tremble, if we understand by tremble not that fear out of joy, but that fear out of anger, or that fear of the guiding rebuking, or that fear of the forsaking; but it is a gladness with tremble, that comes out of the prayer done in the fire of the fear of God. And by fear I neither understand that fear with the trembling came out of anger or out of the eternal damnation, but I understand that fear of the wisdom, that is also called as the beginning of the wisdom (Proverbs 1: 7). And the fear is divided in three (though the Church Fathers divided it in two): the beginner one, the consummate one, and that one out of anger, that must be called as actual trembling, or troubling, or crushing.

6. But one must know that the godlike fear won't have tremble, if one understands by tremble not that fear out of joy, but that fear out of anger, or that of the advising rebuking, or out of forsaking; but it is a gladness with tremble, one that

²⁷⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 114: 4: "The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs."; in ROB we have: Ps. 113: 4: "The mountains jumped as the rams and the hills like the lambs of the sheep." (E. l. t.'s n.)

comes out of the prayer done in the fire of the fear of God. And by fear I am not understanding here either that fear with tremble that come out of anger or out of the eternal damnation, but I understand that of the wisdom (Proverbs 1: 7). And the fear it divided in three (though the Church Fathers divided it in two): the beginner fear, the consummate fear, and that the fear out of anger, that must be called as actual tremble, or disturbance, or crushing.

7. And the trembling is of several sorts: one is that out of fear and another is that out of joy; and again, one is that out of wrath (when is born an overwhelming boiling of the blood around the heart, as some people say), other is that out of olden habit, and other is that of the sin and of the straying; and again, other is that out of the curse coming through Cain upon the mankind. He who is living in asceticism, he is warred, at the beginning, by the trembling out of joy and out of sin. But it is not so to everybody. The signs of these ones are the followings: of the first one, a gladness with tremble and with many tears, when the grace touches the soul; of the second, a disordered warmth, a haughtiness, and the callousness of the heart, which ignites the soul and the limbs towards mating, urging to accepting some shameful deeds, through the hallucination from within.

8. Within any beginner, there is a twofold work, one being committed within his heart in a twofold and unmixed manner: one out of grace and another out of deceit. This is confessed by Mark the Ascetic, when saying: "There is a spiritual work, and there is a devilish work, unknown to the little child". Or, again: "There is a threefold warmth of the work, ignited within people: one out of grace, another out of deceit, and the last one out of the abundance of the blood". Thalassius the African called this one as the mixing of the juices (χρᾶσιν)²⁷⁸ and that can be appeased and brought to order through measured restraint.

9. The work of the grace is the power of the Holy Ghost, a power that moves itself into the heart's joy and gladness, and it upholds, it warms up, and it cleans up the soul. It stops the thoughts for a while, and it kills the lusting movement from within the body. Its signs and its fruits which shows its truth, they are: the tears, the jumping, the humbleness, the restraint,

²⁷⁸ *Heads about Love and Restraint*, III, 32; *The Romanian Philokalia*, IV, p. 21.

the silence, the patience, the hiding, and all traits similar to these, which we gain a doubtless entrustment through.

10. The work of the deceit is the ignition of the sin, one that warms up the soul with the voluptuousness, and it awakens with fury the body's movement towards the mating of the bodies. That lacks any good quality and any order, according to Saint Diadochus²⁷⁹, and it brings: a beastly joy, self-appreciation, wicked insatiable gladness, and those increase the lust for pleasure. That one searches for the matter in order to ignite the pleasures, and it has the insatiable belly as together-working. This is because out of there it is ignited and it is defiled the state of the body's juices. There is the cause of the soul's ignition, which that work pulls it towards itself for, by sinking the man in its habituation and pleasure, it gradually banishes the grace²⁸⁰ out of the man and it makes the man to hiddenly fornicate, in order to make the man to fornicate hiddenly, by making hot and by igniting his limbs through the addiction to pleasure. But it seems to him that what moves his mind and that what warms it up, it is the unknown grace²⁸¹ and not the hot work of the sin, or, better said, of the deceit and of the addition to pleasure (of the sweet addiction). Saint John Climacus, for he knew this, he said: "I asked this one and it answered me: I gained as my helper the ignition from outside

²⁷⁹ *Moral and about Knowledge Heads*, 33; *The Romanian Philokalia*, IV, p. 21.

²⁸⁰ In the Romanian manuscript that comprises several texts belonging to Saint Gregory Sinaite, this is continued with the following four chapters, which the translator of the prototypical copy introduced with the words: "Until here (are) in the Greek one. And into Slavonic issue (edition) there are these words too". In those copies which comprise these four more heads, we mention the manuscripts number 35 and 79 from the Library of the Romanian Patriarchy. We are going to take the four mentioned heads out of Ghenoiu manuscript, pp. 104-107, where they are introduced with the mentioned note. But in the head no. 10 from it, there is added also the following part, before the other four heads. I think that it is similar also in the other manuscripts which add those four heads too. We are adding those for heads in *The Romanian Philokalia*, for it seems to us that itself the title of this writing (*Detailed Teaching*), it includes their content, one that speaks, in continuation, about the sorts of the warmth and about the need for a teacher. Besides that, in the subtle analysis that it comprised in these heads, it seems to us that we can notice the craftsmanship of Saint Gregory Sinaite.

When the Romanians had Greek text at hand, they translated those texts. Only when the Greek texts missed, they translated the Slavonic texts.

²⁸¹ From here we can see that those who were contesting the possibility knowing or of feeling the work of the grace – one that was strongly affirmed by Saint Simeon the New Theologian, by following the examples of Saint Mark the Ascetic and of Diadochus – the ground of their contestation was the possibility of confounding the disordered warmth caused by passion, to the serene and spiritual warmth produced by grace, because, according to them, the work of the grace cannot be ever known, and so to be discerned from that work of the sin.

and the movement of the natural lust, which are causing scattering in order to ignite the man towards a deceiving work”.

11. It is appropriate to know that the ignition from the sin is its deceitfulness. And the work of the sin is out of the loving of pleasures ghost, one that starts moving towards the body's lust, through the sweetness of the foods. But the Lord, by being fire, he showed that the devil is cold not by nature, but through the rebellion of the sin. This is because the devil is lost, by that, the godlike warmth, that warmth that makes the Lord's servants as burning fire. So, the sin, by being coldness, because of lacking God, and the devil being fire, according to his nature, it ignites the man and, through the dampness of the addiction to pleasure, it hurts the lust and it makes the lust accepting the things which cause the pleasure. Thus, consequently to the lost warmth, it gathers the shameful work of the sweetening²⁸².

12. There are two types of wars during prayer: of the deceit and of the grace. Both of them take place according to our will, and not through impartation. Like the sun, shining in the dirtiest places, it doesn't mix itself with the dirt and it isn't hurt by dirt, but rather the sun dries those ones up and the sun banishes away the dirt, likewise, neither the grace mixes itself with the deceit, but the grace remains clean. And even more than that, the grace melts the deceit down. But the grace doesn't want to make the deceit to totally disappear, in order to be possible to exist, together with the grace, our will too, and we to become experiences. This is for the grace wants to remove the deceit as fighting, according to the law, the good fight of our mind, in order for us to be able to get the crown and to be true disciples, by defeating not the pagans but by defeating on Satan himself, that is continuously bringing within us, its attacks, as

²⁸² If I have rendered correctly the clumsy meaning of the Romanian translation from yore, the devil, by losing its natural warmth through the separation from God, but still desiring it by nature, for he had it, at the beginning, in its quality as ghost created by God, it causes a false warmth (a non-loving, egotistic warmth) in itself and in the tempted ones, in order for it to escape, somewhat, the egotistic coldness it fell into, and in order to be able to deceive the tempted ones. We have here an interesting explanation of the coexistence between the egotistic coldness and that warmth without duration or consistency, of the superficial, convulsive, and artificial warmth of the sin, of the passion, of the temptation. It is an explanation of the admixture of hotness of the passion, with the coldness of planning the evil deeds. The sin is, on one hand, warmth, and, on the other hand it is cold cynicism. Saint Gregory Palamas defended in his second treatise of the second triad, that good warmth of the prayer, against Barlaam who was criticizing any showing within body of the effects of the prayer, and who was ridiculing the hesychasts who were speaking about such a warmth.

some flaming ignitions²⁸³. By making hot the oven of our body, with the sweetness of the passions, satan sends its servants, namely the devils, to torment us through thoughts, in order to force us to sacrifice to the idol of the lusts, namely to the baits, and in order us to let our mind to be imparted with those. And the signs of this deceit can be seen when they are put in work: that callousness of the heart that lacks any humiliation, and within some people it is mixed with dark tears; the haughty stance; the gorging of the belly; the much-speaking; the idleness; the self-appreciation; the self-praising for the own work; that warmth without sweetness; the burdening of the soul; the drowsiness of the limbs; the wet sweetness; the savage arousing of the body; the hallucinations of the images which push towards the mating of the bodies. Withing some people like those, there is not serenity and their face doesn't flourish, but they are always dry and burnt by the fire of the addition to pleasure. Describing these, the Great Makarios, after he listed their names, he said: "The vinegar likens to the wine, and the rapeseed to likens the mustard. But the taste discerns amongst them". So, each of them can be understood and found out, out of the signs we have just mentioned above.

13. *The Warmth of the Grace*. The warmth of the grace if the fire of the Ghost, which the Lord has come to throw on earth (Lk. 12: 19), namely within peoples' hearts. And He wants to ignite Himself within us, in order to burn up our sin and to clean our soul, and to comfort our soul and to attract out soul, in an untold manner, towards the love for God and for people. This is because the grace is unmixed with the nature, and the grace gives gifts to the nature out of what the grace has different from the nature. And when the Great Makarios says that both persons work in one and the same mind, he understands that the work of the Ghost is moving within mind, not mixed with the sin, during prayer, but they remain different and each of then alone. On occasions, it happens that the grace works and moves by itself. But, sometimes, the grace is together

²⁸³ In the Byzantine icons of the disciples, there can be seen in the upper corner on the right hand, the angels waiting with the crown in their hands, for the martyrs to endure to the end, with manhood, their torments, so that the angels to crown them at the end. So wants God to crown them who defeat the passions which they must endure like they were martyrs.

with the deceit but, as I have said, in an unmixed manner²⁸⁴. But sometimes the sin works alone (namely the deceit), by warming up our will, because it masters it. And, some other times, the man fight according to the grace, for he sees his soul tormented within and suffering badly. We must also know this: the deceit, to the newer beginners, it is the warmth of the sin. And the deceit to the ones who are in the middle of their advancement, it consists of the hallucination of their mind. This is for the warmth of the deceit or of the sin, it is the ignition of the lust towards sweetness. Or better said, it is the stench of the sweetening by passion, which is soaked within them who still are inexperienced, and who barely – if ever – tasted the all-sweet and the well-fragranced chrism poured within us through the embodiment of the Word of God, that is, in the first place, fiery for cleaning, and later on is good and with good-fragrance, through the holiness of the Ghost, when it sanctifies the soul and the body. This is for the grace is the sanctifying power, as Great Makarios says. And the deceit, by becoming master, through tarrying, it gives power to the work of the sin and the mind suffers badly from baits and from the lust for mating, and it is ignited through hallucination. And by being mixed in the warmth of the prayer, it causes a change in that warmth²⁸⁵. Brought here, they say that the soul fornicates through delusion with the enemy, so that the soul no longer is mysteriously imparted with the Bridegroom Christ. That's why the Apostle too, he calls such people as fornicators and hookers, as some who, according to John Climacus, by lusting for the sin, they are secretly imparted with satan. For Climacus says: "I knew myself as tempted by this thing, that was

²⁸⁴ We have here the Orthodox interpretation of the expression belonging to Makarios, about the existence of the two persons (God and satan) within the human soul, which was reckoned, by diverse newer western theologians, as a sign of the Messalianism.

²⁸⁵ The sinful warmth directly attacks the senses of the beginners, while, to them who are on the middle stage, or on the consummation's stage, it starts with hallucinations brought by the self-appreciation, in order to drag, later on, at tis turn, the soul towards lusts. If in the previous ascetic writing, it was simply affirmed the fact that the soul enters the dialogue with the bait, here is being done a more detailed description of this fact: it is being described what it passes like, form some together-presence within soul, of a deluding thought, with the good decision. Saint Gregory is describing here what their mixing takes place like, or what the mixing of the sinful warmth is done like, with the clean warmth of the prayer. That takes place because of the tarrying of the lust within our soul. One must notice also the analogue description done to the report between the stanching sweetness of the addiction to pleasure and the clean sweetness of the secret chrism of the Holy Ghost.

deceiving me, by mixing the beastly joy with tears and with the comforting of the soul, and it seemed to me that I was receiving fruits, and not corruption". And again: "Take heed at the joy coming to you, in order that not to be from the evil doctors and from tempters".

14. These things have been said, as much as it was possible, about the signs of the grace and of the deceit. And about them who are in the middle work and about consummation, we do not need to say many words, for these ones have God Himself as their Teacher, according to John Climacus. Still, not one must commit this work according to a rule given him by himself (idiorhythmic), without the teaching and the experience of the things which we have written here, earned with tiredness and pain, despite the opposite could seem useful to him. This is lest, due to his faithlessness, him to push himself and others to the deep of the despair. This is for, as says the Great Maximos, I have written these for I to remember them and for other people, and not from myself, but in order I to obey the many who strive themselves to toil into this all-beautiful work which they have been searching for, with the whole their souls. Let's then strive ourselves, with an immeasurable longing, to water the furrow of the work with the river of the chrism, as David says. This is for through it, it is increased within us, the spring of the life and or the wisdom and, out of it, it is clarified to us, through the much wanting, the ceaseless seeing. And thus, the deep of the heart and of the light, it consummates them who advance in humbleness.

Of Saint Gregory Palamas

Words for Them Who Appease Themselves Piously.

The Second Word from the Last Ones.

About Prayer.

1. Somebody could tell that this philosopher²⁸⁶ was urged, by his love for learning, and by his great will for knowledge, to condemn, so unforgivingly, them who do not see any benefit from the external teaching, except from that teaching coming from the Gospel and it is hoped to come, according to the non-liar promise, to them who live according to it. This is for those ones give the paramount importance to the commandments of Christ, and they urge everyone only towards these commandments as being the only ones able to lead the human soul to the likeness to God, to consummate the human soul, and to deify the human soul, and they do not place the external teachings above the earthly teachings, but they call them, according to Paul, as bodily wisdom (1 Cor. 1: 12) and as wisdom of the present age, and they call the Hellenes scholars as some ones who used against God the school of the creation made by God, and they reckon them as false wisemen and unwise. That's why the philosopher got upset, because of not being given to those scholars too, the greatest honor, and that is because he wanted to be partaker to that honor. This is because he even took the title of philosopher for that, and he aimed at that goal with the whole his zeal.

But what other way of serving has uprisen against the "speaking service" (Rom. 12: 1), or, better said, ours, namely

²⁸⁶ It is about Barlaam.

against the prayer and against them who honor the prayer more than anything, and they dedicate themselves to prayer, in quietude, and without worldly worries, for the whole their life, and they help, by experience, those who are introduced to this angelic and above-world liturgy? Who opposes himself, by word, them who chose better to be silent? Who envies them who do not search for honor at all? Who, by leaning himself on the past, he looks, from above, at them who dwell far from stadium? Behold that in his fights from before, for philosophy, the monk and the philosopher proved to be enemy to monks, but to those monks who are still alive; but here, by using the sayings of the Church Fathers who were moved to heavens, in order to topple their words over, I cannot tell why he has started a fight that is, by no means, a little fight.

2. More than against everyone, he daringly directs the power of his word against the things written about prayer by Nicephorus the Confessor; against Nicephorus who, because of giving the good confession about prayer, he was condemned to exile by the first Paleologos who reigned and cogitated the things of the Latins; against Nicephorus who, originating from Italians, but despising their wrong faith and by attaching himself to our right-believer Church, he denies, together with his motherland, also the things of his parents, for he reckons our faith as more precious than his, for the word that teaches, at us, rightly, the truth. He, by coming here, he chose the cleanest life, namely a lonely life, and as a dwelling place he has chosen that place bearing a holy name, in that world between the world and the things above the world, Athos, the home of the virtue. And there he proved, in the first place, that he knew how to let himself to be guided, and he obeyed the most important fathers from Athos. Then, after proving his virtue, for a long time, to those fathers, he received from them the experience of the art of arts, namely of the quietude (hesychia) and he became guide to them who armed themselves, in the world of the mind, in order to fight the ghosts of the evilness (Eph. 6: 12). He even composed for them, a collection of explanations from the fathers, and that collection prepared them towards ascesis, and it classified the sorts of the battles, and it mentions, from before, the rewards, and it describes the crowns of the victory. After that, for he saw that many of the beginners weren't able to master, even partially, the fickleness

of their mind, he gave them a way that could partially stop the wandering and the hallucination of their mind.

3. This philosopher directed, therefore, against Nicephorus, his much-contriving imagination, as a fire that uses what it comes in contact with, as a combustion matter. He isn't ashamed of that blessed confession and of the exile for that confession, neither is him ashamed of them who shared the exile with Nicephorus and so they learnt from Nicephorus the godlike things, and so they proved themselves to be "the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5: 13) and "the light of the world" (Mt. 5: 14) and illustrious illuminators having "the word of the life" (Phil. 2: 16): I mean here: Theoleptos who shined from the city of Philadelphia as a candlestick, and Seliotis, the teacher of the monks, and Elias who embraced the wilderness for the whole his life, as Prophet Elijad did, and the others whom God adorned and strengthened His Church through, and He has raised the Church again. He didn't let himself to be persuaded either by those ones, nor he let himself be guided by them, for they still live the in same way, so that he could renounce to his suspicions or to his evil words against Nicephorus. But he started to rebuke - in long writings - him whom he isn't able to praise enough worthily. Because Nicephorus composed his writing simply and without craftsmanship, the philosopher started contradicting him, whom he could rather learn something from. But let us mention here that theological word: "Not him who is wise in words is wise to us, neither him who is fluent in speech while still having his soul untaught, because of being him like those tombs which are well adorned outside but they are inside full of putrid cadavers, regardless the extent they cover the bad smell from within, but we reckon as wide him who tries to strengthen the words' worthiness to be believed, through his live, and he adorns through deeds the lack of beauty of his words"²⁸⁷. But this scholar didn't succeed either to topple over these simple words, before he crooked them up firstly. We are going to show that soon.

4. For, both at the beginning and at the end, he teaches us about the prayer of the heart, out of his own experience, let's take a look shortly, in the first place, at this prayer. This prayer is of such a kind that it deceives many amongst the inexperienced, through beautiful much-speaking, because they

²⁸⁷ Saint Gregory the New Theologian, *Word no. 16*, 2; G.P. 35, 936 D. – 937 A.

didn't taste the true prayer even for a little. So, let's take a look at the teaching about prayer, but only to that extent us to be able to show its unfitness to the words of the fathers. This is because this prayer starts from the things confessed by the fathers and then ends by showing a way totally contrary to the fathers' assertions. This prayer starts with saying that he who takes care of prayer, he must give peace to his senses. But from here it draws the conclusion that one must fully mortify the passionate part of his soul, in order that not to work through any of its powers in addition to that, one must mortify also the whole common work of his soul and of his body. "This is for each one, he says, it becomes an impediment in the way of the prayer, and especially because of being imparted with some urge and it produces pleasure or pain, especially of the touching, the thickest and the most irrational amongst senses". So, somebody could tell him who affirms such things: he who takes care of prayer must not fast or take vigil, neither to hurt his knees, nor to sleep on the floor, neither to stand too much, or do anything similar. This is because all of those cause a pain to the touching, and they bring about a hindrance, as you say, to the soul that prays. So, we must provide our soul, while praying, a lack of hindrance²⁸⁸. "Actually, it would be odd – he says again – us to despise, when praying, the sight and the hearing, the most immaterial and the most dispassionate and the most rational amongst senses, while accepting the sense of touching, that is the thickest and the most irrational sense and to collaborate with its works". But he didn't notice, despite being a philosopher, the difference between senses, and what

²⁸⁸ Barlaam represented, maybe in an exaggerated mode through what he argued regarding this matter, a rationalism of scholastic type, one that got accustomed to require the shunning of the body from any tiredness during prayer, in order not to make feel uncomfortable the soul that prays. In East, there were maintained the distinction between the mortification of the sensations of pleasure and accepting the sensation of pain. Only those can help the body to truly become free of sensations of pleasure, by enduring the sensations situated at the antipodes of the pleasure. And only the sensations of pleasure tempt the soul to lean towards the things of the world and of the body, and so they take the soul far from prayer. It is easy to run away from pain. But the victory over the cowardice caused by pain one cannot obtain it except through the heroism of accepting the pain. This is because of running away from pain, it is as well a pleasure. Thus, one does nothing for sanctifying his body. And the tiredness and the pain do not stop the soul from praying, but they carry the soul and they upheld the soul in prayer. This is for the tiredness and the toil make us feel the limits of our power and of our life, and so we shout out towards God. On the opposite, the voluptuousness, by giving the feeling of the power, of the self-sufficiency, it will stop the soul from praying.

differently they are imparted with the bodily power from within them; he didn't see that not all of them are moved only by the perceptions coming from outside. But we, for we want to explain what happens to the senses articulated into matter, out of the immaterial prayer, and out of the all-consummate habituation to that prayer, out of that work that looks at The One, we are going to mind only this one. But "He Who gives prayer them who pray"²⁸⁹ and them who speak about Him, let Him give us word according to our decision.

5. We need to appease those senses which are moved by the things from outside, when we turn our attention towards the things from within us. But what they need that for, those which accompany our soul's dispositions, namely the good ones? And then, what method could help him who has reached within himself, to get rid of these?²⁹⁰ But what he should then try for, to get rid of these ones, once they do not oppose, but they even collaborate to this inwards state as much as possible? This is for we have been given this body as our pair, by God, or, better said, this body has been submitted to us as a pair. So, when our body rebels, we must stop it, and when it allows us to guide it as it should, we must welcome it. The hearing and the seeing are cleaner and more rational than the touching, but none of them would perceive anything, neither they would suffer any pain by that, if there didn't fall under their work, from outside, something that can be heard or seen, but something soundless and shapeless. But the body suffers more pain through the sense of the touching, when we strive with the fasting and so we do not provide our body with food from outside. That's why, they who gather themselves within themselves, from the external realities, they stop the work of the senses which do not work when the external stimuli aren't present, for those senses remain inside, but how could one stop the senses which work even in the absence of the external stimuli, especially when these ones tend, as well, to the aimed

²⁸⁹ 1 Kings 2: 9 (in KJB we have 1 Saul 2: 9 (E. l. t.'s n.)); Evagrius, *About Prayer* 58; G.P. 79, col. 118 A; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. I, p. 81.

²⁹⁰ No man can get rid of his body's tiredness and pain, by his own will, neither during prayer, as he can get rid of the sensations provided by his hearing and sight, for those are lived through the whole his body, and they are combined with the states from within him, for being produced both by the body's movement and state, so that they never can be completely avoided.

purpose?²⁹¹ And, the fact that the painful feeling through the sense of the touching it is most beneficial them who pray with the mind (with the understanding), it is known by everyone who tasted, even partially, the fight through it, and they need almost no words, for they know that by experience. For this reason, they do not even listen to them who research these things by word; they say that such a knowledge by word makes people haughty (1 Cor. 8: 1).

6. In addition to that, they who truly pray with their mind, they must be dispassionate and they should have rejected their connection with the things which are in the middle (between them and God), for that is the only way they can reach the undisturbed prayer; and they who haven't reached this measure yet, they must cross over the addiction to pleasure (the sweet addiction), in order they to totally liberate themselves from addiction. But for that, the sinful impulse of the body must become totally dead, and that consists of deliverance from addiction, and to have the thought stronger than the evil movements of the passions from the cogitation's world, and that means surpassing the addiction to pleasure. And if is so - and it is so -, as long as we are dominated by addiction, we won't be able to taste the prayer of the mind not even with the word from the tip of our lips, and we mandatorily need to feel the pain of the fasting, of the vigil, and of others like these, if we want to take care of prayer. This is because only through those it is mortified the sinful impulse of the body, and the thoughts which move the animalic passions, they become more temperate and weaker. And not only that, but it brings also the beginning of the sanctified pricking of the heart, which the unclean defilements from before are erased through, and that makes God, above everything, merciful and persuaded by prayer. This is for "the crushes heart, God won't make it suffer" (Ps. 50: 19²⁹²), according to David, and according to Gregory the Theologian "God doesn't take care of anything more than He

²⁹¹ The purpose he who prays aims to, it is that of prolonging the prayer for as long as possible; and the purpose aimed by him who wants to consummate himself, it is that of getting rid, as completely as possible, of the passionate impulses. But that requires tiredness, and the tiredness has its cause and effect in the inward moods.

²⁹² In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."; in ROB we have: "The sacrifice of God: the humiliated ghost; the broken and humble heart, God won't make it suffer". (E. l. t.'s n.)

takes care of the harsh suffering”²⁹³. That’s why the Lord too, He teaches us in the Gospels that “much is able the prayer accompanied by fasting” (Mk. 9: 29, Mt. 17: 21).

7. The absence of the pain, which the fathers call it as callousness, that is what stops the prayer; and not the pain lived with the sense of the touching, as he philosophized, the mentioned philosopher, by uttering words deprived of deeds, against them who know these aspects with the working²⁹⁴. That’s why there are some amongst the fathers who declared, somewhat, that the fasting is the essence of the prayer. “The matter of the prayer is the hunger”, as they said²⁹⁵. Others, called the hunger as the “quality” of the prayer. For they reckon as deprived of quality, that prayer without pricking. And another says: “The thirst and the vigil burdened the heart; and out of the burdened hearts flowed tears”²⁹⁶. Or: “The prayer is the mother and also the daughter of the tears”²⁹⁷. Have you seen that the pain lived with the sense of the touching not only that doesn’t become a hindrance against prayer, but it even collaborates with the prayer and it strengthens the prayer? But what these tears are like, which the prayer is both mother and daughter to? Aren’t painful and bitter and biting by nature,

²⁹³ *Word 24*, 11; G.P. 35, 1181 B.

²⁹⁴ John Climacus VI: 14; G.P. 88, 796 B: “The heart’s lack of pain it is the petrification of the mind”. Actually, the pain brings the softening of the soul, and the softening of the soul brings the prayer, and even that prayer with tears. The prayer without this softening it is rather a philosophical meditation, without deep and transforming effects upon our whole being. The pain humanizes our being and it makes it truly transparent. That’s why, in the Eastern Church, we stress so much the importance of the tears. Barlaam was the first to draw, explicitly, such conclusions out of the scholastic rationalism, the cause of the whole rationalism of the Occidental theology. He might have done that on the basis of what already started to be seen in the practice of the prayer in Occident. But it is not less true that, by formulating this conclusion which he reckoned it as resulting out of that, he strengthened it. One cannot say that there weren’t in Occident too, believers who cherished the effort and the pain. But the effort was maybe too much cherished by some orders, on the purpose of imposing the Catholicism as worldly power; and the pain was cherished by some women for their desire to feel in their bodies the wounds of Christ. But all of these were out-of-order phenomena; they weren’t a general rule for the believers who do not follow conquering purposes, but who simply pursue the general cleaning and strengthening of the human nature into God.

²⁹⁵ John Climacus, *The Ladder*, XIV; G.P. 88, 865 D.

²⁹⁶ *Idem*, *quote work*, VI; G.P. 88, 796 B.

²⁹⁷ *Idem*, *quoted work*, XXVII; G.P. 88, 1129 A. Out of tears of pain, there comes the prayer, and the prayer, as expression of the powerful feeling of our insignificance and of our sinfulness in front of God, it gives birth to tears. These ones go together, and only their accompanying increases the quality of the prayer and the quality of the being of each of us, and it gets out soul out of callousness.

them who recently tasted the blessed crying, and them who fully rejoiced of that crying, do not become, those tears, as wet and unpainful tears? What they defiled the prayer like, therefore, or, better said, what the give birth to prayer like, and what the ones which are bodily consummate are born like, out of it, namely those which produce sweetness and pain to the feeling? How God gives these ones, as a gift, according to him who says: "If you have gained tears in your prayer, it means that God has touched the eyes of your heart and you have seen with your mind (with your understanding)"²⁹⁸.

8. But Paul, he said, kidnapped to the third sky, he didn't see either that he was within body or outside the body" (2 Cor. 12: 2), as one who forgot about all the aspects of the body. If, therefore, it is characteristic to him who hurries himself up towards God, through prayer, to be insensitive to the aspects of the body, what could be like, gifts from God, the aspects he must liberate himself from, he who hurries himself up towards God? But not only of the bodily works, he who hurries himself up towards the union with God, he must liberate himself from, but, according to Great Dionysius, he must also forsake all the works of his mind and all the godlike lights and the whole ascension of the holy peaks²⁹⁹. But then, none of these was a gift from God, neither the ascension of the holy peaks, once he who hurries himself up towards the union with God, he must liberate himself from those?³⁰⁰ "But, he says, what could be these ones out of grace like, because they cannot be felt during that prayer that unites the man with God? - they would be futile. But there is nothing futile at God. Behold that you rejoice of a vain-speaking, oh, man, and you draw us too, to such words. Do you reckon the godlike union as something unimportant, once you affirm that it doesn't surpass great and useful gifts, but only vain things? And what isn't present when

²⁹⁸ Saint Mark the Hermit, *About the Spiritual Law* 12; G.P. 65: 908. The tears which accompany the prayer are a sign that God touched the heart of him who prays, and so his heart has been softened, and that touch is so intensely felt that it equivalent to a true "seeing" of God by him to is made partaker to it. The touch from God, on the heart of him who prays, it has this effect of softening the heart, for it is a touch done with mercy and with love; this touch it has the character of the most-loving and most-merciful Person.

²⁹⁹ *About the Mystical Theology*; G.P. 3, 1000 C.

³⁰⁰ Saint Gregory Palamas reckons the surpassing of all the stages of the spiritual ascension not as a launching in a void, but as a state of reaching into the supreme content. To Gregory Palamas, the apophatic is not a void, but it is a positive richness above any possibility to define it.

this union is being done, do you reckon all of those as vain?³⁰¹ You are really proving yourself as unelevated above the vain things. This is because, if you ascended above them you would know how much the union with God is elevated even above the useful things.

9. And you rejoice so much, by moving yourself amongst the vain ones, so that, by not knowing anything about prayer, you still prolong the word into a vain-much-speaking, insomuch that you call the spiritual grace of the prayer, as shown within heart, as “hallucination” that “bear within itself the idol of the heart”. But they who have been found worthy of it, they know it not like an imprinting of a hallucination, neither as depending on us, nor as now being and then no longer being after, but they know it like a tireless work produced by grace, one existing together with the soul and rooted within the soul, and giving birth to a spring of sanctified gladness that attracts the mind to itself, and it gets the mind out of the defiled and of-many-sorts hallucinations, and it makes the mind to be without pleasure towards all the sweetness that has a bodily image³⁰². And sweetness with bodily image, I call that what crosses, from the body’s pleasures, into thought, and so they together give birth to a pleasant image that attracts them to itself.

But that what passes from that soul that spiritually rejoices himself, to the body, even it happens to work within body, it will still be spiritual³⁰³. This is because the pleasure

³⁰¹ Barlaam reckoned that the thoughts of the cogitation, even during prayer, they must be felt. Because otherwise those won’t be gifts from God, but they would be only vain things. Palamas reckons that those aren’t vain, despite the fact that on the peak of the union with God, they won’t be felt any longer. But the union is above those. According to Barlaam, the thoughts of the cogitation are either felt, and then they are the highest thing, one that is maintained also in the prayer that unites the man with God, or they aren’t felt and so they are vain. Palamas cherished the whole ascension, but he reckoned the union with God as being beyond that ascension. The ascension is cherished for it leads to union. But the ascension is surpassed by union. To Barlaam the thinking is everything, or, otherwise, there will be nothing.

Saint Gregory Palamas proves in these pages, as there can rarely be found other like them, a cogitation of great subtlety and of a rare analytical capacity.

³⁰² Saint Gregory Palamas, as all the spiritual writers from East, he ties tightly the hallucinations to the impulses towards pleasures. Where the last ones are no longer present, the soul ascends above any image, in an understanding feeling of the presence and of the power of God.

³⁰³ Not the fact that it works within body, it makes the movement bodily and defiled, but the fact that the movement is imprinted by the searching for a pleasure that is felt anticipatedly. Even within mind, there can dwell a thought of bodily and defiled character, when it starts out

passing from the body to the mind, it makes the mind to become bodily, and so the mind won't be improved by being imparted with what is best, but that will convey to the mind what is worst, so that the whole man will be called, because of that, as "body", according to what was told about the ones who were drawn by the anger of God, that "My Ghost won't remain into these people, because they are bodies" (Gen. 6: 3). But likewise, that spiritual pleasure that, by starting from the mind, it passes to the body, it won't be spoiled by participating to body, and it will transform the body and it will make the body spiritual. This is for, in such a case, the body will reject the evil bodily lusts and it won't any longer drag the body downwards, but the body will be taken, together with the soul, upwards. And the spiritual pleasure makes the man to be ghost, according to what was written: "He who is born out of Ghost, he will be ghost" (Jn. 3: 6). All of these become obvious by experience.

10. And to him who fight through words and who argues out of love for quarrel, it will suffice us to tell him that neither us, nor the Church have such a habit to guide themselves by unworking words. We honor the working word (the word in deed) and the speaking deed (the deed in word)³⁰⁴. But because he also lay down these words in writing, in order somebody not to be deceived by thinking that he says something appropriate, and so somebody to be kidnapped by lie, at our turn, we make the truth known and we expose his lie by writing ourselves, and we use some small of greater things for that. Thus, we show

of such a body's impulse desiring for pleasure. On the opposite, when out of that soul that rejoices cleanly, or spiritually, a movement reaches within body, that movement still remains clean within body and it cleans and it spiritualizes the body. It depends, therefore, what the target of the movement is: God, or the bodily pleasure concomitantly to forgetting about God. The body isn't evil by itself. We cannot find in the Eastern asceticism any Manicheist trait, neither Origenistic traits, as we can find in the Catholic theology. The body too, it is destined to deification, and it can be sanctified and deified.

³⁰⁴ Λόγον ἐμπρακτον και πραξιν ελλόγιμος. The work must be embodied into deed, therefore into body, in order the word to be able to reach the whole its efficacy, and in order to be able to transform us, and the deed must be comprised into the word, or the word to have in itself the experience and the accumulation of power of the deed. There is an interior connection between word and deed, between spirit and body. The deed is potentially comprised into word, into spirit, and it accomplishes the word. The full or the efficient word is that word embodied into deed, and the deed is full and the body is spiritualized, when they are imprinted by the word, and when they receive meaning and interpretation through word. Thus, the deed speaks and the word works. The deed is the actualized word and the word is the deed potentialized.

everywhere the fathers who wrote oppositely to this new teacher of the unworking, who, because he rejects the good things one commits into body as hard, he rejects, of course, also the spiritual dispositions imprinted into body³⁰⁵. But the whole holy by-God-instilled Scripture is full of such dispositions occurred within body: “My heart, he says, and my body rejoice of the living God” (Ps. 83: 2³⁰⁶) and: “In Him I hoped and I was helped and my body flourished” (Ps. 27: 7³⁰⁷), and again: “What sweet are like, Your words, top my throat, sweeter than honey is to my mouth” (Ps. 68: 103³⁰⁸).

That he is speaking about the seen mouth, it is limpidly shown by Saint Issac too, when saying: “It is a sign of the advanced ones, the words of the prayer becoming sweet in their mouth”³⁰⁹. And Saint Diadochus says that the feeling of the soul is one that learns the works itself of the Holy Ghost coming within us, one that can be known by nobody, except by them who have liberated themselves from the goods of the life for the hope of the future goods. This is for, the mind by moving itself powerfully, due to the lack of worries, the mind feels the godlike goodness in an untold manner, and the mind communicated it to the body too, through the mind’s kindness, according to the measure of the mind’s progress, as David says: “Towards Him my heart hoped and I was helped and my body flourished” (Ps.

³⁰⁵ Rejecting the good deeds, it means not only rejecting a sum of deeds external to us, but it means also rejecting the good dispositions of the mind as imprinted into body and, therefore, the possibility of sanctifying the body, or the prolongation of the word, or of the spirit, into body, and so stopping the body from actualizing its power. The Protestantism, by rejecting the deeds, it rejects the possibility of sanctifying the body, namely of the man’s strengthening, by and large. But the Protestantism did that in order to oppose Catholicism, that made out of deeds a quantity external to this accomplishment, one that doesn’t transform the man but it asks for a reward, as it would be a simple merchandise.

³⁰⁶ In KJB we have: Ps. 84: 2: “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 83: 2: “It desires and it faints my soul for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my body rejoiced of the living God.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

³⁰⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 28: 7: “The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 27: 9-10: “The Lord is my helper and my defender, in Him my heart hoped and He helped me. // And my body flourished and I will willingly praise the Lord.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

³⁰⁸ In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 103: “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 103: “What sweet are like, to my tongue, Your words, more than honey, into my mouth!” (E. l. t.’s n.)

³⁰⁹ *Word no. 31*; ed. Teotochi, p. 343.

28: 7³¹⁰). And this joy that occurs within our soul and within our body, it is an undeceiving heralding of the incorruptible life”³¹¹.

11. But the philosopher says that this earnest of the future age, this heralding of the incorruptibility, this work of the All-Holy Ghost, it cannot be produced by a godlike cause, and it especially cannot take place during the mind’s prayer. And the reasons why he says that the changes produced within body too – by the work of the holy Ghost – they cannot be out of God, these reasons would be these four: first, because the “gifts out of God are all-consummate, but a better thing is to be the soul in prayers and above feeling, than the soul to work somehow, through feeling. So, because those ones aren’t all-consummate – because of there being something better than those are – they won’t be from God”³¹².

And how comes that? For prophesizing is greater than speaking in languages, does that deem the charisma of the languages as not being a gift from God? And for the love is the most consummate amongst charismas, does that make the love the only godlike gift and there won’t be no other? Aren’t there also: the prophesizing, the powers, the helpings, the rulings, the charismas of the healers, the word of wisdom and of the knowledge into the Ghost, and the discerning amongst the ghosts, aren’t all of these godlike gifts too? But also, amongst them who heal, or who prophesize, or who have the gift of discerning, and, in short, amongst all of them who are gifted with any of these charismas, aren’t amongst them some smaller and some of them greater? This is for, Paul too he thanked God, for he “speaks more than anyone, in languages” (1 Cor. 14: 18); but he who has a smaller gift, he too has the gift from God. And again, the same apostle says: “Aspire for greater charismas” (1 Cor. 12: 31), meaning that there are some smaller charismas.

This is for, “even star from star differs in shininess” (1 Cor. 15: 41), namely in the richness of its light, but no star is without light, then it isn’t true what has been asserted by the

³¹⁰ Vid supra.

³¹¹ Head no. 25; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 343.

³¹² Barlaam didn’t admit a work of God that can be known through feeling and through deeds, namely through body. Barlaam locked God up into an absolute transcendence. And by that, he operated also an impossible to cross over separation, from spirit to body. So, he didn’t admit that the man can live God. he cogitated God only as being beyond the man’s life, and as not being able to sanctify the man’s life.

philosopher, after he started against hesychasts, that the gifts from God are only the all-consummate ones. And also, the brother of the Lord, from amongst apostles, he said: "All consummate gift is from above" (Jas. 1: 11), but he didn't say: "all-consummate". But the philosopher, by daring to add to the godlike words, something from himself, it is natural that he started against them who read the godlike work through working.

So, we are asking him: Won't the saints advance, in the future age, endlessly, in seeing God? It is obvious to anybody that they advance endlessly³¹³. This is for, Dionysus, the interpreter of the heavenly realities, he taught us that also the angels enjoy an eternal advancing into the heavenly realities, through the previous illumination they being ever capable of the clearer illumination. But neither I have seen or heard, amongst them who have been imparted with that one, during the earthly age, one who haven't desired an even more consummate illumination. So, if the desire of the ones who have achieved the illumination, it doesn't cease, and if the previous grace empowers them to be imparted with the greater gifts, and if He Who gives Himself as Gift is endless and he united Himself plentifully and abundantly, what will there still be the impediment against the endless advancing of the sons of the future age, by achieving grace out of grace, and by ascending, joyfully, the tireless ascension. Therefore, every gift from above is consummate, but not all-consummate. This is for The Consummate One does not receive adding³¹⁴.

12. This has been the first amongst the arguments of the philosopher. The second argument, even more daring, it is that: "the soul is nailed to the body and the soul is filled up with darkness, by loving the works which are common to the passionate side that is common to the soul and to the body". But what pain, what pleasure, what movement within body,

³¹³ About the progressive consummation of the saints after their death, the first to speak was Clement of Alexandria, *Stomata* 7: 3.

³¹⁴ The gift from God is all-consummate in itself, but, because of us not being able to receive it thus, all at once, it adapts to the measure we are at. Saint Gregory Palamas sees the ascension towards God as it be a ladder, for that ascension is, in the same time, an ascension into consummation. Barlaam, who represented the scholastic abstract rationalism, that reckons that God isn't accessible except to the logical thinking, whose definition is all-comprising from the beginning, Barlaam didn't see a progress in knowing God by the experience of a soul, a soul that can be cleaned, furthermore, through virtue.

isn't a work both of the body and of the soul? So, it seems to me that this sentence too, it was uttered by the philosopher without him thinking, and it was uttered in a general manner about the realities which aren't general. This is because of being there also blessed sufferings, and there are common works of the body and of the soul, which do not nail the ghost to the body, but they elevate the body close to the worthiness of the soul, and which persuade the body to tend upwards. Which are these? The spiritual ones, which do not go from body to ghost, as I have mentioned before, but they pass from mind to body, and by what they work and suffer, they transform the body towards better and they deify the body³¹⁵.

This is for, as it is common to the soul and to the body the godhead of the embodied Word of God, and it deifies the body through the mediation of the soul, so that are consummated through body deeds of God, likewise to the spiritual men, the grace of the Ghost, by passing through the mediation of the soul, to the body, it gives the body too, the sufferings of the godlike realities, and it given the body to suffer blessingly, together with the soul, that suffers the godlike realities and that, once it suffers the godlike realities, it has also something suffering (παθητικόντι), praiseworthy and godlike. Better said, the passionate side from within us, it is one that can become also praiseworthy and godlike³¹⁶. This is for, by

³¹⁵ Barlaam, by speaking in his quality as philosopher, namely in the spirit of an abstract rationality, he simplifies the things on two ways: firstly, he despises the body during the ascension of the believer towards God, and towards the good, by and large; secondly, he utters a general judgment upon things which differ from one another, not taking heed at the concrete variety of the reality. Palamas, who was a faithful interpreter of the biblical and patristic tradition, he sees that there are sufferings which are common to the soul and to the body, and which do not defile either the mind, and which help the body too, to ascend together with the soul, towards God.

³¹⁶ Here, Saint Gregory Palamas is giving the ultimate reason that highlights even the value of the passionate side of the soul, that is the most common to the soul and body. This reason is the embodiment of the Word. His godhead was communicated also to the body, through the soul. But it was communicated to the body through what is common to the soul and body, namely through the passionate side. How could have Christ suffered, together with His soul, if there hadn't been this passionate side that unites the soul and the body? And what would have been like, the pain of the body, different from the pain of the animal, if there wouldn't have been this participation of the soul to that pain? And how could have Christ suffered the passions without opposing them, if there had not been the godhead united with them? And, especially, through the passionate part that unites the soul with the body, a part that is characterized by the power of enduring, our human nature experiences the godlike realities, or it accepts them. Through it, therefore, any human being can be deified. Thus, the purely human and reproachable passion, it becomes deified and praiseworthy. So it happens to us

advancing to accomplishing this blessed purpose of it, the passionate side deifies the body too, by not being moved by the bodily and material passions, even if it seem so to the inexperienced ones, but rather, itself turning towards itself, the body, and attracting the body from the pleasure for the evil things, and instilling to the body, through itself, a holiness and a deification which the body can no longer be robbed of³¹⁷. The limpid proof of this fact are the wonder-doer relics of the saints.

And Stephen, the first martyr, while he was still living, “he had his face shining like the face of an angel” (Acts 6: 15). Didn’t his body too, suffer the godlike realities? Consequently, also this suffering and its work, they are common both to the soul and to the body. And this together-suffering of theirs, it doesn’t become a nail, to the soul, one that nails the soul to the earthly thoughts and so it would fill the soul up with darkness, as the philosopher said, but it is a connection and an untold union with God, a union that detaches even the body, in a wonderful manner, from the evil and earthly passions³¹⁸.

“This is for, the powerful ones of God”, to use here the words of the prophet, “they have been elevated, very, from on earth” (Ps. 46: 9³¹⁹).

too, due to the grace that crosses through our soul, into our body, through the passionate part that unites the soul with the body.

³¹⁷ Continuing to commend the positive role the passionate side of the human nature receives, Palamas shows that through it, the grace deifies the body, when the passionate side doesn’t allow itself to be stolen by the bodily passions which are dominated by pleasure, but it elevated the body on the stage of patience, through the grace that has been imprinted into the passionate side. Only through the passionate side, the body can be determined to suffer cleanly, and, by that, the body clean be sanctified. And without the sanctification of our body, we cannot reach to be sanctified in the totality of our being. The passionate side is the channel which the grace crosses through, from mind to body. It is being affirmed here an existence that is alive, existential, and passionate – in the good and active sense of this word -, a truly transformative spirituality, instead of one that is deprived of life, and of power, one theoretical and abstract. Palamas explicitly fought for the body, for the deification of the total, concrete human being, and not for a phantom-idea lacking any life, one neglecting and despising the body, one letting the body in the brambles and in the domination of the negative forces which decompose the body.

³¹⁸ The clean together-suffering of the body and of the soul, it isn’t a nail that nails the soul to the body, but it is an untold connection (συνδεσμος τις) of theirs to God. This is for, the painful but clean suffering, it detaches the believer from the inferior impulses and it directs him towards God. Just this together-suffering is a power from God. Otherwise, one couldn’t have endured it.

³¹⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 46: 10: “The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 45: 9: “The rulers of the earth gathered with the people of God

Of this kind are the untold works which you hear about that are done within the bodies of them who have embraced, in a holy manner, and for the whole their life, the sanctified quietude (hesychia). And what seems irrational in those works, it is actually above-rationality, and it escaped, by exceeding, the understanding of him who studies them with his rationality and who do not search to know those works by deed and by experiencing them in an unmediated manner³²⁰. And if this one doesn't bring faith, for the faith is the only one able to receive the above-rationality truth, (we slide into error³²¹) by explaining, woe to us, the holy realities without holiness, (and so we³²²) mock the things of the piousness.

13. This is for, after that, he brings the apostle back to us, as we said before, for that one said that, in that wonderful kidnapping, he didn't know "whether he was into body or outside body", for the Ghost caused the forgetfulness of all the aspects related to body. "If the forgetfulness is of everyone, says the philosopher, then also the untold sweetness and warmth, which I have found out that they take place within hesychasts, the Ghost will make them forgotten by His coming, but He won't produce those. And, doubtlessly, if the phenomena which happen within him are gifts from God, it will be wrong to say that he who truly prays must forget about all things. This is for no one must forget the things given him by God towards good. And if one must forget these things, how won't be absurd to be God reckoned as the unmediated cause of the things whose absence and forgetfulness are better for prayer?"

The fact that most of the gifts of the Ghost, and almost all of them, those gifts occur within the worthy one in time of prayer, anyone who cogitate rightly will know that surely. This is for, the Lord says: "Ask for, and it will be given to you" (Mt. 7: 7). So, not only this kidnapping, and this only to the third sky, but such are any of the gifts of the Ghost. And the fact that some of them are worked through the body too, it is shown by

of Abraham, for the powerful of the earth belong to God; He has been very extolled." (E. l. t.'s n.)

³²⁰ The works committed within saints aren't irrational works, as those works seem to be, but they are above-rationality, namely they are of a complex rationality, a rationality that isn't fragmentary, as there is the rationality of the processes of the nature, processes which end in decomposition, and therefore they bear within themselves, as finality, the nonsense.

³²¹ (Added by E. l. t.'s n.)

³²² (Vid supra)

the kinds of the languages and of their interpretations, which are also received through and into prayer, as Paul says: "He who speaks into languages, let him pray to interpret them" (1 Cor. 15: 13). And not only these ones, but also the word of the teaching and the gifts of the healing and the deeds of the powers and the laying on of the hands of Paulk (2 Cor. 1: 6), which the witness of the Holy Ghost was brought through. It is right that the word of the teaching, the grace and the interpretation of the languages, though they are born out of prayer, they might work also in case the prayer is absent within soul. But the healings and the powers couldn't reach their work if the soul of him who works each of them didn't pray, in the first place with him mind, but sometimes giving sound with the body too. But the impartation with the Ghost is works only when the prayer is present within soul – namely when that prayer that mysteriously commits the union of him who prays with the uncreates spring of that great gift -, so, only when is present that prayer that is worked with the mind; this is for, one cannot tell what the apostles were uttering with their mouths, on those occasions (Acts 18: 1); so, the impartation is worked not only when the soul prays with the mind, but also when the body works too, through the hands which share the Ghost, by touching him who are under his hands. So, what are those gifts? Aren't they gifts from the Ghost, and aren't they given those who asked for them and who pray for them, towards better, for the reason that they who are kidnapped to the third sky must forget about all the things he done through their bodies?³²³

14. But let's better give here the philosopher's words themselves: "If the things happening within them during prayer, as these powers and gifts, are gifts from God, it is wrong to say that he who prays within his mind, he must forget about all things. This is because no one must forgive the things given by

³²³ Barlaam found in the words of Saint Apostle Paul – that he was kidnapped to the third sky, so that he no longer knew if he was into his body or outside his body – a ground for his idea that he who prays he must forgive about everything, so that he must liberate himself from all the works, to break up with all the works. Saint Gregory Palamas, at his turn, he evoked the deeds committed by Saint Apostle Paul as a proof for the fact that, during the prayer of the mind, into body and through body, there take place clean states and deeds, which are crossed through by the godlike grace. The prayer is to Saint Gregory Palamas, a deed of power, one shown into body and through body, and it is not a state and work of the soul separated from the body.

God towards good. And if he who is elevated through prayer, he owes to forget all of these, how comes that it is not wrong to say that God is the cause of those things whose forgetfulness and absence are better to prayer?”.

But, oh you the wonderful one! Them who pray sincerely, God sometimes gets them out of themselves, by elevating them above themselves, and by kidnapping them, in an untold manner, to havens; some other times, while they are within themselves, God Himself works through their body and soul, the realities which are mysterious and above-nature and not-understood by wiseman of the present age. And, actually, to the apostles who were yore persevering in praying and asking, in the upper room, by coming the Ghost, He didn't give them, as gift, to get out of themselves (ecstasy), neither the Ghost kidnapped them to heavens, but the Ghost opened their mouths through the fire tongues, and through them was the Ghost speaking the things which must be forgotten by them who reach the ecstasy, if they must forget about themselves³²⁴.

When Moses is silent, God says: “What do you shout out towards Me for?” (Exod. 14: 15). This word shows that Moses was praying himself. But, Moses by praying thus, wasn't him in feeling and didn't he feel the shouts of his people and the danger that was menacing them or, didn't he feel that seen staff he held in his hand? Therefore, how God didn't kidnap him, neither God detached Moses from his senses – because you argue that only this is given by God to them who pray – but God pushed Moses towards that staff and God instilled power not only into Moses's soul, but into his body too, and into his hand too, which you affirm about, that he who prays with him mind he must forget about all of them? And, while that one was silent, didn't he hit the sea with the staff he held in his hand, first in order to split it, and then in order to united the sea after their crossing? Didn't he have in his soul the unscattered remembrance of God and, wasn't him united, through the

³²⁴ But Barlaam found in the words of Saint Apostle Paul, namely that he forgot whether he was into body or not, also a reason to argue that the states and the deeds crossed through by grace, they aren't gifts from God, because the gifts from God mustn't ne forgotten. Everything that takes place within body, regardless how clean, was thrown by Barlaam into the bin; he retained only the speculation. Palamas noticed that they who are praying, they won't be all of them kidnapped, but some of them will be left, by God, in works given them by Himself, as gifts. The prayer isn't a simple “meditation”, but it is struggle, it is a straining of the entire being.

prayer of the mind, with The One Who was the Only One Who could work through Moses, while Moses didn't lack the feeling of the works which were done through his body?

15. But because he brought also witnesses from writings, let's see: aren't those witnesses contrary as well, to his opinions about prayer? Before all, he brought the Great Dionysus who would be, as he reckons, a together-confessor for his opinions, for he wrote towards Saint Timothy: "By persevering, strongly, around the mysterious views, you will leave also the feelings and the works of the mind and all the ones which are submitted to senses and to mind, and you will stretch yourself, as much as possible, towards the union with The One Who is above any being and knowledge"³²⁵. But itself this word of advice, sent by the godlike Dionysus to Timothy – a word that this wiseman brought it as proof in order to show that only he cogitates without any mistake about the prayer of the mind – it shows him, as the following word is going to present it, as one who totally abolishes the prayer of the mind, as he has been doing through all his previous words. This is because, he who rejects the beginning of the prayer, that is the state of fear and of deep pain, one full of much sighing into the crushing of the heart, due to the sadness for longing after God, and the prayer with tears and with the pricking of the heart, accompanied by the pain of the fasting and of the lack of sleeping into the sense of the touching, and the duty of the beginners to elevate the divided mind to a more unified, and therefore appropriate, prayer, he who despises all of these will reckon, consequently, also the end of the prayer and, simply, the entire prayer, as something bad, and he will fight to consummately abolish the prayer³²⁶.

You tell me this, in the first place, oh, you the philosopher: aren't either the works of the (understanding) mind given from God, or, aren't they shown during prayer as cleaner than ever and, must him - who hurries up towards the godlike union – leave these ones too? But the prayer is, as I said before,

³²⁵ *About the Mystical Theology* 1: 1; G.P. 3: 997 B.

³²⁶ Fearing of God, the humiliation, the fasting, and the other deeds of this kind, they depend on prayer insomuch that Saint Gregory Palamas reckoned them as the beginning of the prayer. Actually, itself the fear of God and the full of repentance pricking of the heart, they are a phasis of the prayer; the prayer speaks to God and he who prays, he feels God speaking and working within his heart. Thus, the prayer is a state of great emotion; the prayer is loaded with the fullness of the being in state of repentance, or humbleness, and of hope.

“the mother of the all-wise cogitations”³²⁷. Then we must also cogitate that, more than anything, the prayer of the consummate ones it is a work of the mind. This is for, the mind of ones like these ones, by not being focused either on the body or on the realities from around them, by not working either through feeling or through the feeling’s companion: the imagination, and by not tarrying either into the rationalities of the things through cogitation and contemplation, by persevering only into prayer, how would they not work, as full as possible, within themselves, by praying? But Dionysus urged Timothy to leave the works of the mind too, and, therefore, the prayer too. And you declare that there is nothing good, neither from God into prayers, and in all the ones who are forsaken and as many as one must no longer feel them, when he has exited from himself into an ecstasy towards the high ones. Therefore, according to you, the prayer isn’t a good thing, neither it is from God Who give prayer to him who prays?³²⁸

16. But I am reminding, again, your words, applying them to the prayer of the mind: “Being confessed by anybody, that he who strives himself towards the godlike union he must be without feeling towards anything, and he must forget about himself, and God gives His hand to one like this one, in order him to be freed from all things and God kidnaps him out of all things”, if he who prays no longer has any feeling of the prayer, how could be from God the prayer he doesn’t feel? This is because, this feeling would be vain, and nothing is vain out of God. And if he who prays, he feels the prayer, how could the prayer that is instilled him by God, because you say that he who turns himself towards God, he must liberate himself of prayer too, once God gives as gift, him whom He unveils into light, the forgetfulness of all things, even of the works of the mind? Can you see what your words “About Prayer” abolish like, consummately, the prayer? But that saint, by urging saint

³²⁷ Diadochus, *Heads*, 70; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 365.

³²⁸ Barlaam, quoting Dionysus who said that, in the union with God, the mind must leave the prayer too, he deduced that, because everything that must be forsake it is something bad, and therefore it isn’t from God, the prayer is bad too, and therefore the prayer is not from God. Palamas admits that in the union with God, the soul is elevated even above prayer. But from here one must not deduce that the prayer would be bad, neither that the prayer isn’t necessary to the who want to reach the union with God. And even like some kind of supreme emotional awareness of the presence of God and of our dependence on God’s mercy and love, the prayer remains even on the stage of our union with God.

Timothy to place stairs within his heart (Ps. 83: 6), he elevated him from high things to higher things and, by leading him through those higher things, he placed him on the highest peak.

But you, wiseman in all things, I do not know how could you imagine that the ones from earth reach, directly, the heavenly height³²⁹. You bring the godlike Maximos too, as your witness, for he said: “When, lit up by love, the mind got out of itself towards God, the mind no longer feels either itself, or the things”³³⁰. “Therefore, says this teacher, it no longer feels either the feelings which are produced by that prayer into body. The necessary conclusion is that those take place vainly”. But we could say: so, the prayer is vain too, for it won’t be felt then, as well. So, according to these words, praying is futile. But truly futile and insane it is to draw such conclusions out of the affirmation belonging to Saint Maximos. But one might ask: What does Saint Maximos say - for he praised and loved more than anything, the godlike love - by the words: “When the mind has exited, from itself, towards God, then the mind won’t feel either on itself of the things”? “Then” - he says. But while the mind is in itself, praying mentally, the mind feels on itself and it feels the blessed feelings which occur in itself and within the body united with the mind, due to the holy prayer.

17. But the philosopher brings as argument for his opinion, also a third witness from that one: “The highest state of the prayer consists of reaching the mind out of body and out of world and of being the mind totally immaterial and shapeless during prayer”³³¹. ‘So, it will be, as the philosopher concludes, in this state, outside even from the feeling from within body, which I am speaking about’. But, as far as we know, amongst those who are dressed up into body, no one is ceaselessly imparted with such a state, except, maybe, for this new teacher of the prayer. And even they who are rarely imparted with it,

³²⁹ The Barlaam’s opinion, soaked with the theory of the prayer as purely intellectual meditation, it was that the prayer of the mind doesn’t need the steps of the virtues as climbed tiresomely, in order to reach the union with God. To him, this union was a state of theological intellectual apophatism, a simple union of the mind with all the known ideas - a theoretical denial of all affirmations in order to have the exact meaning of God as above all affirmations. But this would mean to be united with God through a pure intellectual procedure. And that doesn’t need the crossing through the stages of the virtues and of the prayer.

³³⁰ *Heads about Love I*: 10; G.P. 90: 964 A. *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 38.

³³¹ *Heads about Love II*: 61; G.P. 90: 1001 D. *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 68.

they are very rare too. So, the most part of the time everyone pray while being into body and experiencing, in the same time, the feelings from within themselves. How much more then, they won't feel the sanctifies and produced by prayer feeling, which the prayer consummates and elevates and makes them spiritual within them which they are in, and do not lower them, neither make them evil nor corrupt them? This is because, there is also such a sort of feelings, not only not sanctified, but natural, as we are taught by themselves the feelings we have, which are being consummated when we experience the external realities and which are like some images of the deifying consummation produced by the Holy Ghost, from above³³².

The beginning of that consummation is the fear of God (Proverbs 1: 7; 9: 10). Out of these ones, one can see that the passionate part of the soul isn't mortified through habituation, as the philosopher thinks and teaches, but it advances to a loving-of-God work, it gains the savior pricking and the blessed crying which brings the bath of the forgiveness, the renewal of the birth out of God, namely the tears of the repentance³³³.

This loving-of-God and useful tear, it wings up the prayer³³⁴, according to the words of the fathers, it illuminated the eyes of the mind, when it is united with the prayer, it preserves the grace from the godlike bath, according to Gregory the Theologian³³⁵, and it will bring the grace back if lost, and that's why it is called as the second bath of the holy rebirth and of the second godlike baptism, which is more painful, and it is not less important than the first baptism but it is rather

³³² Saint Gregory Palamas knows that, besides the feelings produced by the Ghost, within body, during prayer, there are also those which are natural to be body but which are sanctified by the Ghost during prayer; namely, he knows besides the extraordinary charismas produced by the Ghost (the gift of the healing etc.), also a state of cleanness of all the natural movements from within body (the clean joy, the clean crying, the need for food kept within the limits of the cleanness etc.). Among these last ones, there are also the clean feeling of the external realities. They are sanctified, during prayer, by the Holy Ghost. But they are only some images of the deifying consummation, and not the consummation itself of the state of deification.

³³³ It is again affirmed here, the fact that the passionate side must not be mortified. On the opposite, only by increasing it, by living ever more intensely God, and our own sinfulness, one can achieve the closeness to God and advances towards consummation.

³³⁴ John Climacus, *The Ladder* XXVIII; G.P. 88: 1132 C. The tear wings up the prayer for it represents a state of humiliation and of repentance in front of God Who is a spring of the prayer. The tear illuminates the eyes of the mind, for it makes the mind seeing, due to the humbleness and intense feeling of the own sinfulness, the godlike presence and glory.

³³⁵ *Word* no. 40: 31; G.P. 36: 401 D – 404 A.

greater. For that was declared someone amongst fathers, saying: “The spring of the tears from after baptism it is greater than Baptism”. And this tear that cleans and kidnaps from the earthly things and it elevates and it unites with the grace of that birth out of God, and by that it deified him who has that tear, isn’t a common work of the body and of the passionate side of the soul?

18. How, then, could we agree him who says that “the soul, by loving the common works of his and of the passionate side of the body, they are filled up with darkness and they are lowered to the lower ones? This is because, all the deeds which are common to the soul and to the body, the more they are noticed by the soul, the more they blind the soul up, so that, if there place such works have taken within us – works which are common both to soul and body – I will reckon that those works will have taken place also towards damaging the work which the mind ascends towards the realities from above through”.

Isn’t him shown, by these words, as cogitating and teaching the things which are contrary to us, for we have been taught by saints, of better said, by the Holy Ghost? This is for the saints say that there is a common work of the soul and of the body, but truly godlike too, one that produces to the soul the godlike illumination, and that delivers both the soul and the body from the evil passions, and it brings to them, instead, the whole holy choir of the virtues. “This is for, he says, he who wants to remove his passions, he gets rid of them through crying; and he who wants to gain virtues, he achieves them by crying”³³⁶. Therefore, the saints tell us that there are works common to the soul and body, which are rather useful to the soul. But the philosopher says that there is none. “This is because all of them, he says, they make the soul look downwards, and all the movements which are common to soul and body, they take place towards bad and towards damaging the soul”.

The philosopher won’t be absolved either by not declaring, especially, this work as damaging, but he will be found guilty for placing this work too, amongst the bad works; and especially for he attempted stealing the consent of the listeners through such trick. This is because God says through the prophet: “The lawlessness of the priests condemned amongst Jews, it is that

³³⁶ Isaac the Syrian, *Word* no. 85, editor Teotochi.

of not discerning between the holy and the unclean” (Exod. 22: 16). And the philosopher, together with other many works common to soul and body, he hasn’t discerned between the blessed weeping and the unclean works.

19. “But, he says, I do not reckon this weeping as dispassionate and blessed. This is because, what could be dispassionate like, what is done through the work of the suffering (passionate) side of the soul? And what could be dispassionate like, he who maintains in working the suffering (passionate) side of his soul and who hasn’t consummately killed that one, through habituation?”.

But we haven’t learnt, oh you the philosopher, that the dispassion means killing the passionate side, but we have learnt that it means moving the passionate side from the evil things to the good things, and it means directing its work, through habituation, towards the godlike things, after it has been totally turned away from the evil things towards the good things. And, to us it is dispassionate him who has lost his habits and who has enriched himself in good things, “he who has been imprinted by virtues, like the passionate ones are imprinted by evil pleasures”³³⁷, he who has obeyed his wrath and lust – which together compose the passionate side of the soul – to the soul’s knowing and judging and rational power, like they who are addicted, they have obeyed their rational power to their passionate side. This is because, the bad employment of the soul’s powers it is the one that gives birth to the passions which are worthy of disapproval, and like the bad employment of the knowledge about things it gives birth to the crazy wisdom³³⁸.

And if somebody uses his wrath and lust well, by knowing the things understood spiritually, he gains the knowledge about God, through the passionate side of his soul, when his soul moves for what he was created by God for, by working the corresponding virtues: through lust, he achieves the love within

³³⁷ John Climacus, *The Ladder* XXIX; G.P. 88: 1149 A.

³³⁸ The dispassion isn’t, in the teaching of the Holy Fathers, a negative state, one of insensitiveness, as there would be Buddhism, but it is a state of positive employment of the souly powers, namely of the wrath and of the lust. And for this good employment requires an intense effort, the dispassion implied more power than the passionate state does. Barlaam gave important only to speculation, not to the sanctification of the believer too, including here that of the body. Barlaam represented the Occidental mentality that mainly stressed the theology as theory, and not the consummation of the believer.

his heart, and through his wrath, he achieved patience. Therefore, not him who has killed this side of his soul – because, if that was the case, he would be motionless and unworking even towards godlike habits, affections, and moods –, but him who has take it into submission, for, by obeying it to the mind – that has received, by nature, the leading, from God –, to be lest as it ought, and by that to tend reaching the habituation of the godlike disposition, and to elevate it on the most consummate level. And this is the love for God, which the mind received through – according to the mentioned word – the commandments of the beloved One, and out of this it learns, it works, and it achieved the clean and consummate love towards the neighbor, which the dispassion is impossible not to be together with too³³⁹.

20. This way towards the consummate love through dispassion, it is freely open and it ascends towards the realities form above, and it matches especially them who have withdrawn themselves from the world. This is for, once they have dedicated themselves to God and they persevere, with an undisturbed mind, in the dialogue with Him, through this together-living, they easily reject the burden of the evil passions and they gather up the treasure of the love. And they who are moving themselves within world, they owe that, by forcing themselves, to use the things from within world according to the commandments of God. In this case, also the passionate side of their soul, by participating to this effort, it will work according to those commandments. And this effort, by being prolonged through habituation, it will produce a sweet affection towards the godlike commandments and it will transform the pleasant disposition towards them, in habit. This habit, at its turn, it will cause a steadfast hatred towards the evil habits and affections.

³³⁹ Through the good employment of the lust, one achieves the love for God, and through the good employment of the wrath – which, together with the lust, they compose the passionate side – one achieves the patience. And they are well employed when they obey to the mind. The mind, by ceaselessly remembering God, and by being accompanied by the lust in this undertaking, they both get habituated to love God. And by patiently fulfilling the commandments, one reaches to love his neighbor, and that implies a great spiritual strength. But this cannot exist without dispassion, without renouncing to the egotistic love for oneself, and to his inferior pleasures. That love that implies the dispassion, or the suffering that conditions the love, they do not have, consequently, nothing negative within them. They are instilled by an impulse of the love for God and for the neighbor, of the love for everything that is good, namely by an impulse opposed to any egotism. But the love, which the positive dispassion is involved in, it would be impossible, if the feeling side of our nature was killed.

And this hatred against the evil habits it brings forth the dispassion, out of which is born the love for The-Only-One-Good³⁴⁰.

³⁴⁰ Saint Gregory Palamas reckons that the monks are the easiest to reach the dispassion. Still, the dispassion isn't forbidden to the laymen. The main means the laymen have, in order to use it on this purpose, it is their effort to use the things from within world according to the commandments of God, namely towards fulfilling all the good things and towards loving the neighbor. By prolonging this kind of employment, the laymen reach to get habituated to this good usage of the things of the world and to the aversion towards the bad usage of them, or towards the passionate usage of them.

Of Saint Gregory Palamas

Words for Them Who Appease Themselves Piously.

The Second Word from the Last Ones.

About Prayer.

1. Somebody could tell that this philosopher³⁴¹ was urged, by his love for learning, and by his great will for knowledge, to condemn, so unforgivingly, them who do not see any benefit from the external teaching, except from that teaching coming from the Gospel and it is hoped to come, according to the non-liar promise, to them who live according to it. This is for those ones give the paramount importance to the commandments of Christ, and they urge everyone only towards these commandments as being the only ones able to lead the human soul to the likeness to God, to consummate the human soul, and to deify the human soul, and they do not place the external teachings above the earthly teachings, but they call them, according to Paul, as bodily wisdom (1 Cor. 1: 12) and as wisdom of the present age, and they call the Hellenes scholars as some ones who used against God the school of the creation made by God, and they reckon them as false wisemen and unwise. That's why the philosopher got upset, because of not being given to those scholars too, the greatest honor, and that is because he wanted to be partaker to that honor. This is

³⁴¹ It is about Barlaam.

because he even took the title of philosopher for that, and he aimed at that goal with the whole his zeal.

But what other way of serving has uprisen against the “speaking service” (Rom. 12: 1), or, better said, ours, namely against the prayer and against them who honor the prayer more than anything, and they dedicate themselves to prayer, in quietude, and without worldly worries, for the whole their life, and they help, by experience, those who are introduced to this angelic and above-world liturgy? Who opposes himself, by word, them who chose better to be silent? Who envies them who do not search for honor at all? Who, by leaning himself on the past, he looks, from above, at them who dwell far from stadium? Behold that in his fights from before, for philosophy, the monk and the philosopher proved to be enemy to monks, but to those monks who are still alive; but here, by using the sayings of the Church Fathers who were moved to heavens, in order to topple their words over, I cannot tell why he has started a fight that is, by no means, a little fight.

2. More than against everyone, he daringly directs the power of his word against the things written about prayer by Nicephorus the Confessor; against Nicephorus who, because of giving the good confession about prayer, he was condemned to exile by the first Paleologos who reigned and cogitated the things of the Latins; against Nicephorus who, originating from Italians, but despising their wrong faith and by attaching himself to our right-believer Church, he denies, together with his motherland, also the things of his parents, for he reckons our faith as more precious than his, for the word that teaches, at us, rightly, the truth. He, by coming here, he chose the cleanest life, namely a lonely life, and as a dwelling place he has chosen that place bearing a holy name, in that world between the world and the things above the world, Athos, the home of the virtue. And there he proved, in the first place, that he knew how to let himself to be guided, and he obeyed the most important fathers from Athos. Then, after proving his virtue, for a long time, to those fathers, he received from them the experience of the art of arts, namely of the quietude (hesychia) and he became guide to them who armed themselves, in the world of the mind, in order to fight the ghosts of the evilness (Eph. 6: 12). He even composed for them, a collection of explanations from the fathers, and that collection prepared them towards ascesis, and it classified the sorts of the battles,

and it mentions, from before, the rewards, and it describes the crowns of the victory. After that, for he saw that many of the beginners weren't able to master, even partially, the fickleness of their mind, he gave them a way that could partially stop the wandering and the hallucination of their mind.

3. This philosopher directed, therefore, against Nicephorus, his much-contriving imagination, as a fire that uses what it comes in contact with, as a combustion matter. He isn't ashamed of that blessed confession and of the exile for that confession, neither is him ashamed of them who shared the exile with Nicephorus and so they learnt from Nicephorus the godlike things, and so they proved themselves to be "the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5: 13) and "the light of the world" (Mt. 5: 14) and illustrious illuminators having "the word of the life" (Phil. 2: 16): I mean here: Theoleptos who shined from the city of Philadelphia as a candlestick, and Seliotis, the teacher of the monks, and Elias who embraced the wilderness for the whole his life, as Prophet Elijad did, and the others whom God adorned and strengthened His Church through, and He has raised the Church again. He didn't let himself to be persuaded either by those ones, nor he let himself be guided by them, for they still live the in same way, so that he could renounce to his suspicions or to his evil words against Nicephorus. But he started to rebuke - in long writings - him whom he isn't able to praise enough worthily. Because Nicephorus composed his writing simply and without craftsmanship, the philosopher started contradicting him, whom he could rather learn something from. But let us mention here that theological word: "Not him who is wise in words is wise to us, neither him who is fluent in speech while still having his soul untaught, because of being him like those tombs which are well adorned outside but they are inside full of putrid cadavers, regardless the extent they cover the bad smell from within, but we reckon as wide him who tries to strengthen the words' worthiness to be believed, through his live, and he adorns through deeds the lack of beauty of his words"³⁴². But this scholar didn't succeed either to topple over these simple words, before he crooked them up firstly. We are going to show that soon.

4. For, both at the beginning and at the end, he teaches us about the prayer of the heart, out of his own experience, let's

³⁴² Saint Gregory the New Theologian, *Word no. 16*, 2; G.P. 35, 936 D. – 937 A.

take a look shortly, in the first place, at this prayer. This prayer is of such a kind that it deceives many amongst the inexperienced, through beautiful much-speaking, because they didn't taste the true prayer even for a little. So, let's take a look at the teaching about prayer, but only to that extent us to be able to show its unfitness to the words of the fathers. This is because this prayer starts from the things confessed by the fathers and then ends by showing a way totally contrary to the fathers' assertions. This prayer starts with saying that he who takes care of prayer, he must give peace to his senses. But from here it draws the conclusion that one must fully mortify the passionate part of his soul, in order that not to work through any of its powers in addition to that, one must mortify also the whole common work of his soul and of his body. "This is for each one, he says, it becomes an impediment in the way of the prayer, and especially because of being imparted with some urge and it produces pleasure or pain, especially of the touching, the thickest and the most irrational amongst senses". So, somebody could tell him who affirms such things: he who takes care of prayer must not fast or take vigil, neither to hurt his knees, nor to sleep on the floor, neither to stand too much, or do anything similar. This is because all of those cause a pain to the touching, and they bring about a hindrance, as you say, to the soul that prays. So, we must provide our soul, while praying, a lack of hindrance³⁴³. "Actually, it would be odd – he says again – us to despise, when praying, the sight and the hearing, the most immaterial and the most dispassionate and the most rational amongst senses, while accepting the sense of

³⁴³ Barlaam represented, maybe in an exaggerated mode through what he argued regarding this matter, a rationalism of scholastic type, one that got accustomed to require the shunning of the body from any tiredness during prayer, in order not to make feel uncomfortable the soul that prays. In East, there were maintained the distinction between the mortification of the sensations of pleasure and accepting the sensation of pain. Only those can help the body to truly become free of sensations of pleasure, by enduring the sensations situated at the antipodes of the pleasure. And only the sensations of pleasure tempt the soul to lean towards the things of the world and of the body, and so they take the soul far from prayer. It is easy to run away from pain. But the victory over the cowardice caused by pain one cannot obtain it except through the heroism of accepting the pain. This is because of running away from pain, it is as well a pleasure. Thus, one does nothing for sanctifying his body. And the tiredness and the pain do not stop the soul from praying, but they carry the soul and they upheld the soul in prayer. This is for the tiredness and the toil make us feel the limits of our power and of our life, and so we shout out towards God. On the opposite, the voluptuousness, by giving the feeling of the power, of the self-sufficiency, it will stop the soul from praying.

touching, that is the thickest and the most irrational sense and to collaborate with its works". But he didn't notice, despite being a philosopher, the difference between senses, and what differently they are imparted with the bodily power from within them; he didn't see that not all of them are moved only by the perceptions coming from outside. But we, for we want to explain what happens to the senses articulated into matter, out of the immaterial prayer, and out of the all-consummate habituation to that prayer, out of that work that looks at The One, we are going to mind only this one. But "He Who gives prayer them who pray"³⁴⁴ and them who speak about Him, let Him give us word according to our decision.

5. We need to appease those senses which are moved by the things from outside, when we turn our attention towards the things from within us. But what they need that for, those which accompany our soul's dispositions, namely the good ones? And then, what method could help him who has reached within himself, to get rid of these?³⁴⁵ But what he should then try for, to get rid of these ones, once they do not oppose, but they even collaborate to this inwards state as much as possible? This is for we have been given this body as our pair, by God, or, better said, this body has been submitted to us as a pair. So, when our body rebels, we must stop it, and when it allows us to guide it as it should, we must welcome it. The hearing and the seeing are cleaner and more rational than the touching, but none of them would perceive anything, neither they would suffer any pain by that, if there didn't fall under their work, from outside, something that can be heard or seen, but something soundless and shapeless. But the body suffers more pain through the sense of the touching, when we strive with the fasting and so we do not provide our body with food from outside. That's why, they who gather themselves within themselves, from the external realities, they stop the work of the senses which do not work when the external stimuli aren't present, for those senses remain inside, but how could one stop

³⁴⁴ 1 Kings 2: 9 (in KJB we have 1 Saul 2: 9 (E. l. t.'s n.)); Evagrius, *About Prayer* 58; G.P. 79, col. 118 A; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. I, p. 81.

³⁴⁵ No man can get rid of his body's tiredness and pain, by his own will, neither during prayer, as he can get rid of the sensations provided by his hearing and sight, for those are lived through the whole his body, and they are combined with the states from within him, for being produced both by the body's movement and state, so that they never can be completely avoided.

the senses which work even in the absence of the external stimuli, especially when these ones tend, as well, to the aimed purpose?³⁴⁶ And, the fact that the painful feeling through the sense of the touching it is most beneficial them who pray with the mind (with the understanding), it is known by everyone who tasted, even partially, the fight through it, and they need almost no words, for they know that by experience. For this reason, they do not even listen to them who research these things by word; they say that such a knowledge by word makes people haughty (1 Cor. 8: 1).

6. In addition to that, they who truly pray with their mind, they must be dispassionate and they should have rejected their connection with the things which are in the middle (between them and God), for that is the only way they can reach the undisturbed prayer; and they who haven't reached this measure yet, they must cross over the addiction to pleasure (the sweet addiction), in order they to totally liberate themselves from addiction. But for that, the sinful impulse of the body must become totally dead, and that consists of deliverance from addiction, and to have the thought stronger than the evil movements of the passions from the cogitation's world, and that means surpassing the addiction to pleasure. And if is so - and it is so -, as long as we are dominated by addiction, we won't be able to taste the prayer of the mind not even with the word from the tip of our lips, and we mandatorily need to feel the pain of the fasting, of the vigil, and of others like these, if we want to take care of prayer. This is because only through those it is mortified the sinful impulse of the body, and the thoughts which move the animalic passions, they become more temperate and weaker. And not only that, but it brings also the beginning of the sanctified pricking of the heart, which the unclean defilements from before are erased through, and that makes God, above everything, merciful and persuaded by prayer. This is for "the crushes heart, God won't make it suffer" (Ps. 50: 19³⁴⁷), according to David, and according to Gregory the

³⁴⁶ The purpose he who prays aims to, it is that of prolonging the prayer for as long as possible; and the purpose aimed by him who wants to consummate himself, it is that of getting rid, as completely as possible, of the passionate impulses. But that requires tiredness, and the tiredness has its cause and effect in the inward moods.

³⁴⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 51: 17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."; in ROB we have: "The sacrifice of God: the humiliated ghost; the broken and humble heart, God won't make it suffer". (E. l. t.'s n.)

Theologue “God doesn’t take care of anything more than He takes care of the harsh suffering”³⁴⁸. That’s why the Lord too, He teaches us in the Gospels that “much is able the prayer accompanied by fasting” (Mk. 9: 29, Mt. 17: 21).

7. The absence of the pain, which the fathers call it as callousness, that is what stops the prayer; and not the pain lived with the sense of the touching, as he philosophized, the mentioned philosopher, by uttering words deprived of deeds, against them who know these aspects with the working³⁴⁹. That’s why there are some amongst the fathers who declared, somewhat, that the fasting is the essence of the prayer. “The matter of the prayer is the hunger”, as they said³⁵⁰. Others, called the hunger as the “quality” of the prayer. For they reckon as deprived of quality, that prayer without pricking. And another says: “The thirst and the vigil burdened the heart; and out of the burdened hearts flowed tears”³⁵¹. Or: “The prayer is the mother and also the daughter of the tears”³⁵². Have you seen that the pain lived with the sense of the touching not only that doesn’t become a hindrance against prayer, but it even collaborates with the prayer and it strengthens the prayer? But what these tears are like, which the prayer is both mother and

³⁴⁸ *Word 24*, 11; G.P. 35, 1181 B.

³⁴⁹ John Climacus VI: 14; G.P. 88, 796 B: “The heart’s lack of pain it is the petrification of the mind”. Actually, the pain brings the softening of the soul, and the softening of the soul brings the prayer, and even that prayer with tears. The prayer without this softening it is rather a philosophical meditation, without deep and transforming effects upon our whole being. The pain humanizes our being and it makes it truly transparent. That’s why, in the Eastern Church, we stress so much the importance of the tears. Barlaam was the first to draw, explicitly, such conclusions out of the scholastic rationalism, the cause of the whole rationalism of the Occidental theology. He might have done that on the basis of what already started to be seen in the practice of the prayer in Occident. But it is not less true that, by formulating this conclusion which he reckoned it as resulting out of that, he strengthened it. One cannot say that there weren’t in Occident too, believers who cherished the effort and the pain. But the effort was maybe too much cherished by some orders, on the purpose of imposing the Catholicism as worldly power; and the pain was cherished by some women for their desire to feel in their bodies the wounds of Christ. But all of these were out-of-order phenomena; they weren’t a general rule for the believers who do not follow conquering purposes, but who simply pursue the general cleaning and strengthening of the human nature into God.

³⁵⁰ John Climacus, *The Ladder*, XIV; G.P. 88, 865 D.

³⁵¹ *Idem*, *quote work*, VI; G.P. 88, 796 B.

³⁵² *Idem*, *quoted work*, XXVII; G.P. 88, 1129 A. Out of tears of pain, there comes the prayer, and the prayer, as expression of the powerful feeling of our insignificance and of our sinfulness in front of God, it gives birth to tears. These ones go together, and only their accompanying increases the quality of the prayer and the quality of the being of each of us, and it gets out soul out of callousness.

daughter to? Aren't painful and bitter and biting by nature, them who recently tasted the blessed crying, and them who fully rejoiced of that crying, do not become, those tears, as wet and unpainful tears? What they defiled the prayer like, therefore, or, better said, what they give birth to prayer like, and what the ones which are bodily consummate are born like, out of it, namely those which produce sweetness and pain to the feeling? How God gives these ones, as a gift, according to him who says: "If you have gained tears in your prayer, it means that God has touched the eyes of your heart and you have seen with your mind (with your understanding)"³⁵³.

8. But Paul, he said, kidnapped to the third sky, he didn't see either that he was within body or outside the body" (2 Cor. 12: 2), as one who forgot about all the aspects of the body. If, therefore, it is characteristic to him who hurries himself up towards God, through prayer, to be insensitive to the aspects of the body, what could be like, gifts from God, the aspects he must liberate himself from, he who hurries himself up towards God? But not only of the bodily works, he who hurries himself up towards the union with God, he must liberate himself from, but, according to Great Dionysius, he must also forsake all the works of his mind and all the godlike lights and the whole ascension of the holy peaks³⁵⁴. But then, none of these was a gift from God, neither the ascension of the holy peaks, once he who hurries himself up towards the union with God, he must liberate himself from those?³⁵⁵ "But, he says, what could be these ones out of grace like, because they cannot be felt during that prayer that unites the man with God? - they would be futile. But there is nothing futile at God. Behold that you rejoice of a vain-speaking, oh, man, and you draw us too, to such words. Do you reckon the godlike union as something unimportant, once you affirm that it doesn't surpass great and

³⁵³ Saint Mark the Hermit, *About the Spiritual Law* 12; G.P. 65: 908. The tears which accompany the prayer are a sign that God touched the heart of him who prays, and so his heart has been softened, and that touch is so intensely felt that it equivalent to a true "seeing" of God by him to is made partaker to it. The touch from God, on the heart of him who prays, it has this effect of softening the heart, for it is a touch done with mercy and with love; this touch it has the character of the most-loving and most-merciful Person.

³⁵⁴ *About the Mystical Theology*; G.P. 3, 1000 C.

³⁵⁵ Saint Gregory Palamas reckons the surpassing of all the stages of the spiritual ascension not as a launching in a void, but as a state of reaching into the supreme content. To Gregory Palamas, the apophatic is not a void, but it is a positive richness above any possibility to define it.

useful gifts, but only vain things? And what isn't present when this union is being done, do you reckon all of those as vain?³⁵⁶ You are really proving yourself as unelevated above the vain things. This is because, if you ascended above them you would know how much the union with God is elevated even above the useful things.

9. And you rejoice so much, by moving yourself amongst the vain ones, so that, by not knowing anything about prayer, you still prolong the word into a vain-much-speaking, insomuch that you call the spiritual grace of the prayer, as shown within heart, as "hallucination" that "bear within itself the idol of the heart". But they who have been found worthy of it, they know it not like an imprinting of a hallucination, neither as depending on us, nor as now being and then no longer being after, but they know it like a tireless work produced by grace, one existing together with the soul and rooted within the soul, and giving birth to a spring of sanctified gladness that attracts the mind to itself, and it gets the mind out of the defiled and of-many-sorts hallucinations, and it makes the mind to be without pleasure towards all the sweetness that has a bodily image³⁵⁷. And sweetness with bodily image, I call that what crosses, from the body's pleasures, into thought, and so they together give birth to a pleasant image that attracts them to itself.

But that what passes from that soul that spiritually rejoices himself, to the body, even it happens to work within body, it will still be spiritual³⁵⁸. This is because the pleasure

³⁵⁶ Barlaam reckoned that the thoughts of the cogitation, even during prayer, they must be felt. Because otherwise those won't be gifts from God, but they would be only vain things. Palamas reckons that those aren't vain, despite the fact that on the peak of the union with God, they won't be felt any longer. But the union is above those. According to Barlaam, the thoughts of the cogitation are either felt, and then they are the highest thing, one that is maintained also in the prayer that unites the man with God, or they aren't felt and so they are vain. Palamas cherished the whole ascension, but he reckoned the union with God as being beyond that ascension. The ascension is cherished for it leads to union. But the ascension is surpassed by union. To Barlaam the thinking is everything, or, otherwise, there will be nothing.

Saint Gregory Palamas proves in these pages, as there can rarely be found other like them, a cogitation of great subtlety and of a rare analytical capacity.

³⁵⁷ Saint Gregory Palamas, as all the spiritual writers from East, he ties tightly the hallucinations to the impulses towards pleasures. Where the last ones are no longer present, the soul ascends above any image, in an understanding feeling of the presence and of the power of God.

³⁵⁸ Not the fact that it works within body, it makes the movement bodily and defiled, but the fact that the movement is imprinted by the searching for a pleasure that is felt anticipatedly.

passing from the body to the mind, it makes the mind to become bodily, and so the mind won't be improved by being imparted with what is best, but that will convey to the mind what is worst, so that the whole man will be called, because of that, as "body", according to what was told about the ones who were drown by the anger of God, that "My Ghost won't remain into these people, because they are bodies" (Gen. 6: 3). But likewise, that spiritual pleasure that, by starting from the mind, it passes to the body, it won't be spoiled by participating to body, and it will transform the body and it will make the body spiritual. This is for, in such a case, the body will reject the evil bodily lusts and it won't any longer drag the body downwards, but the body will be taken, together with the soul, upwards. And the spiritual pleasure makes the man to be ghost, according to what was written: "He who is born out of Ghost, he will be ghost" (Jn. 3: 6). All of these become obvious by experience.

10. And to him who fight through words and who argues out of love for quarrel, it will suffice us to tell him that neither us, nor the Church have such a habit to guide themselves by unworking words. We honor the working word (the word in deed) and the speaking deed (the deed in word)³⁵⁹. But because he also lay down these words in writing, in order somebody not to be deceived by thinking that he says something appropriate, and so somebody to be kidnapped by lie, at our turn, we make the truth known and we expose his lie by writing ourselves, and

Even within mind, there can dwell a thought of bodily and defiled character, when it starts out of such a body's impulse desiring for pleasure. On the opposite, when out of that soul that rejoices cleanly, or spiritually, a movement reaches within body, that movement still remains clean within body and it cleans and it spiritualizes the body. It depends, therefore, what the target of the movement is: God, or the bodily pleasure concomitantly to forgetting about God. The body isn't evil by itself. We cannot find in the Eastern asceticism any Manicheist trait, neither Origenistic traits, as we can find in the Catholic theology. The body too, it is destined to deification, and it can be sanctified and deified.

³⁵⁹ Λόγον ἐμπρακτον και πραξιν ελλόγιμος. The work must be embodied into deed, therefor into body, in order the word to be able to reach the whole its efficacy, and in order to be able to transform us, and the deed must be comprised into the word, or the word to have in itself the experience and the accumulation of power of the deed. There is an interior connection between word and deed, between spirit and body. The deed is potentially comprised into word, into spirit, and it accomplishes the word. The full or the efficient word is that word embodied into deed, and the deed is full and the body is spiritualized, when they are imprinted by the word, and when the receive meaning and interpretation through word. Thus, the deed speaks and the word works. The deed is the actualized word and the word is the deed potentialized.

we use some small of greater things for that. Thus, we show everywhere the fathers who wrote oppositely to this new teacher of the unworking, who, because he rejects the good things one commits into body as hard, he rejects, of course, also the spiritual dispositions imprinted into body³⁶⁰. But the whole holy by-God-instilled Scripture is full of such dispositions occurred within body: “My heart, he says, and my body rejoice of the living God” (Ps. 83: 2³⁶¹) and: “In Him I hoped and I was helped and my body flourished” (Ps. 27: 7³⁶²), and again: “What sweet are like, Your words, top my throat, sweeter than honey is to my mouth” (Ps. 68: 103³⁶³).

That he is speaking about the seen mouth, it is limpidly shown by Saint Issac too, when saying: “It is a sign of the advanced ones, the words of the prayer becoming sweet in their mouth”³⁶⁴. And Saint Diadochus says that the feeling of the soul is one that learns the works itself of the Holy Ghost coming within us, one that can be known by nobody, except by them who have liberated themselves from the goods of the life for the hope of the future goods. This is for, the mind by moving itself powerfully, due to the lack of worries, the mind feels the godlike goodness in an untold manner, and the mind communicated it to the body too, through the mind’s kindness, according to the measure of the mind’s progress, as David says: “Towards Him my heart hoped and I was helped and my body flourished” (Ps.

³⁶⁰ Rejecting the good deeds, it means not only rejecting a sum of deeds external to us, but it means also rejecting the good dispositions of the mind as imprinted into body and, therefore, the possibility of sanctifying the body, or the prolongation of the word, or of the spirit, into body, and so stopping the body from actualizing its power. The Protestantism, by rejecting the deeds, it rejects the possibility of sanctifying the body, namely of the man’s strengthening, by and large. But the Protestantism did that in order to oppose Catholicism, that made out of deeds a quantity external to this accomplishment, one that doesn’t transform the man but it asks for a reward, as it would be a simple merchandise.

³⁶¹ In KJB we have: Ps. 84: 2: “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 83: 2: “It desires and it faints my soul for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my body rejoiced of the living God.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

³⁶² In KJB we have: Ps. 28: 7: “The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 27: 9-10: “The Lord is my helper and my defender, in Him my heart hoped and He helped me. // And my body flourished and I will willingly praise the Lord.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

³⁶³ In KJB we have: Ps. 119: 103: “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”; in ROB we have: Ps. 118: 103: “What sweet are like, to my tongue, Your words, more than honey, into my mouth!” (E. l. t.’s n.)

³⁶⁴ *Word no. 31*; ed. Teotochi, p. 343.

28: 7³⁶⁵). And this joy that occurs within our soul and within our body, it is an undeceiving heralding of the incorruptible life”³⁶⁶.

11. But the philosopher says that this earnest of the future age, this heralding of the incorruptibility, this work of the All-Holy Ghost, it cannot be produced by a godlike cause, and it especially cannot take place during the mind’s prayer. And the reasons why he says that the changes produced within body too – by the work of the holy Ghost – they cannot be out of God, these reasons would be these four: first, because the “gifts out of God are all-consummate, but a better thing is to be the soul in prayers and above feeling, than the soul to work somehow, through feeling. So, because those ones aren’t all-consummate – because of there being something better than those are – they won’t be from God”³⁶⁷.

And how comes that? For prophesizing is greater than speaking in languages, does that deem the charisma of the languages as not being a gift from God? And for the love is the most consummate amongst charismas, does that make the love the only godlike gift and there won’t be no other? Aren’t there also: the prophesizing, the powers, the helpings, the rulings, the charismas of the healers, the word of wisdom and of the knowledge into the Ghost, and the discerning amongst the ghosts, aren’t all of these godlike gifts too? But also, amongst them who heal, or who prophesize, or who have the gift of discerning, and, in short, amongst all of them who are gifted with any of these charismas, aren’t amongst them some smaller and some of them greater? This is for, Paul too he thanked God, for he “speaks more than anyone, in languages” (1 Cor. 14: 18); but he who has a smaller gift, he too has the gift from God. And again, the same apostle says: “Aspire for greater charismas” (1 Cor. 12: 31), meaning that there are some smaller charismas.

This is for, “even star from star differs in shininess” (1 Cor. 15: 41), namely in the richness of its light, but no star is without light, then it isn’t true what has been asserted by the

³⁶⁵ Vid supra.

³⁶⁶ Head no. 25; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 343.

³⁶⁷ Barlaam didn’t admit a work of God that can be known through feeling and through deeds, namely through body. Barlaam locked God up into an absolute transcendence. And by that, he operated also an impossible to cross over separation, from spirit to body. So, he didn’t admit that the man can live God. he cogitated God only as being beyond the man’s life, and as not being able to sanctify the man’s life.

philosopher, after he started against hesychasts, that the gifts from God are only the all-consummate ones. And also, the brother of the Lord, from amongst apostles, he said: "All consummate gift is from above" (Jas. 1: 11), but he didn't say: "all-consummate". But the philosopher, by daring to add to the godlike words, something from himself, it is natural that he started against them who read the godlike work through working.

So, we are asking him: Won't the saints advance, in the future age, endlessly, in seeing God? It is obvious to anybody that they advance endlessly³⁶⁸. This is for, Dionysus, the interpreter of the heavenly realities, he taught us that also the angels enjoy an eternal advancing into the heavenly realities, through the previous illumination they being ever capable of the clearer illumination. But neither I have seen or heard, amongst them who have been imparted with that one, during the earthly age, one who haven't desired an even more consummate illumination. So, if the desire of the ones who have achieved the illumination, it doesn't cease, and if the previous grace empowers them to be imparted with the greater gifts, and if He Who gives Himself as Gift is endless and he united Himself plentifully and abundantly, what will there still be the impediment against the endless advancing of the sons of the future age, by achieving grace out of grace, and by ascending, joyfully, the tireless ascension. Therefore, every gift from above is consummate, but not all-consummate. This is for The Consummate One does not receive adding³⁶⁹.

12. This has been the first amongst the arguments of the philosopher. The second argument, even more daring, it is that: "the soul is nailed to the body and the soul is filled up with darkness, by loving the works which are common to the passionate side that is common to the soul and to the body". But what pain, what pleasure, what movement within body,

³⁶⁸ About the progressive consummation of the saints after their death, the first to speak was Clement of Alexandria, *Stomata* 7: 3.

³⁶⁹ The gift from God is all-consummate in itself, but, because of us not being able to receive it thus, all at once, it adapts to the measure we are at. Saint Gregory Palamas sees the ascension towards God as it be a ladder, for that ascension is, in the same time, an ascension into consummation. Barlaam, who represented the scholastic abstract rationalism, that reckons that God isn't accessible except to the logical thinking, whose definition is all-comprising from the beginning, Barlaam didn't see a progress in knowing God by the experience of a soul, a soul that can be cleaned, furthermore, through virtue.

isn't a work both of the body and of the soul? So, it seems to me that this sentence too, it was uttered by the philosopher without him thinking, and it was uttered in a general manner about the realities which aren't general. This is because of being there also blessed sufferings, and there are common works of the body and of the soul, which do not nail the ghost to the body, but they elevate the body close to the worthiness of the soul, and which persuade the body to tend upwards. Which are these? The spiritual ones, which do not go from body to ghost, as I have mentioned before, but they pass from mind to body, and by what they work and suffer, they transform the body towards better and they deify the body³⁷⁰.

This is for, as it is common to the soul and to the body the godhead of the embodied Word of God, and it deifies the body through the mediation of the soul, so that are consummated through body deeds of God, likewise to the spiritual men, the grace of the Ghost, by passing through the mediation of the soul, to the body, it gives the body too the sufferings of the godlike realities, and it given the body to suffer blessingly, together with the soul, that suffers the godlike realities and that, once it suffers the godlike realities, it has also something suffering (παθητικόντι), praiseworthy and godlike. Better said, the passionate side from within us, it is one that can become also praiseworthy and godlike³⁷¹. This is for, by

³⁷⁰ Barlaam, by speaking in his quality as philosopher, namely in the spirit of an abstract rationality, he simplifies the things on two ways: firstly, he despises the body during the ascension of the believer towards God, and towards the good, by and large; secondly, he utters a general judgment upon things which differ from one another, not taking heed at the concrete variety of the reality. Palamas, who was a faithful interpreter of the biblical and patristic tradition, he sees that there are sufferings which are common to the soul and to the body, and which do not defile either the mind, and which help the body too, to ascend together with the soul, towards God.

³⁷¹ Here, Saint Gregory Palamas is giving the ultimate reason that highlights even the value of the passionate side of the soul, that is the most common to the soul and body. This reason is the embodiment of the Word. His godhead was communicated also to the body, through the soul. But it was communicated to the body through what is common to the soul and body, namely through the passionate side. How could have Christ suffered, together with His soul, if there hadn't been this passionate side that unites the soul and the body? And what would have been like, the pain of the body, different from the pain of the animal, if there wouldn't have been this participation of the soul to that pain? And how could have Christ suffered the passions without opposing them, if there had not been the godhead united with them? And, especially, through the passionate part that unites the soul with the body, a part that is characterized by the power of enduring, our human nature experiences the godlike realities, or it accepts them. Through it, therefore, any human being can be deified. Thus, the purely human and reproachable passion, it becomes deified and praiseworthy. So it happens to us

advancing to accomplishing this blessed purpose of it, the passionate side deifies the body too, by not being moved by the bodily and material passions, even if it seem so to the inexperienced ones, but rather, itself turning towards itself, the body, and attracting the body from the pleasure for the evil things, and instilling to the body, through itself, a holiness and a deification which the body can no longer be robbed of³⁷². The limpid proof of this fact are the wonder-doer relics of the saints.

And Stephen, the first martyr, while he was still living, “he had his face shining like the face of an angel” (Acts 6: 15). Didn’t his body too, suffer the godlike realities? Consequently, also this suffering and its work, they are common both to the soul and to the body. And this together-suffering of theirs, it doesn’t become a nail, to the soul, one that nails the soul to the earthly thoughts and so it would fill the soul up with darkness, as the philosopher said, but it is a connection and an untold union with God, a union that detaches even the body, in a wonderful manner, from the evil and earthly passions³⁷³.

“This is for, the powerful ones of God”, to use here the words of the prophet, “they have been elevated, very, from on earth” (Ps. 46: 9³⁷⁴).

too, due to the grace that crosses through our soul, into our body, through the passionate part that unites the soul with the body.

³⁷² Continuing to commend the positive role the passionate side of the human nature receives, Palamas shows that through it, the grace deifies the body, when the passionate side doesn’t allow itself to be stolen by the bodily passions which are dominated by pleasure, but it elevated the body on the stage of patience, through the grace that has been imprinted into the passionate side. Only through the passionate side, the body can be determined to suffer cleanly, and, by that, the body clean be sanctified. And without the sanctification of our body, we cannot reach to be sanctified in the totality of our being. The passionate side is the channel which the grace crosses through, from mind to body. It is being affirmed here an existence that is alive, existential, and passionate – in the good and active sense of this word -, a truly transformative spirituality, instead of one that is deprived of life, and of power, one theoretical and abstract. Palamas explicitly fought for the body, for the deification of the total, concrete human being, and not for a phantom-idea lacking any life, one neglecting and despising the body, one letting the body in the brambles and in the domination of the negative forces which decompose the body.

³⁷³ The clean together-suffering of the body and of the soul, it isn’t a nail that nails the soul to the body, but it is an untold connection (συνδεσμος τις) of theirs to God. This is for, the painful but clean suffering, it detaches the believer from the inferior impulses and it directs him towards God. Just this together-suffering is a power from God. Otherwise, one couldn’t have endured it.

³⁷⁴ In KJB we have: Ps. 46: 10: “The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 45: 9: “The rulers of the earth gathered with the people of God

Of this kind are the untold works which you hear about that are done within the bodies of them who have embraced, in a holy manner, and for the whole their life, the sanctified quietude (hesychia). And what seems irrational in those works, it is actually above-rationality, and it escaped, by exceeding, the understanding of him who studies them with his rationality and who do not search to know those works by deed and by experiencing them in an unmediated manner³⁷⁵. And if this one doesn't bring faith, for the faith is the only one able to receive the above-rationality truth, (we slide into error³⁷⁶) by explaining, woe to us, the holy realities without holiness, (and so we³⁷⁷) mock the things of the piousness.

13. This is for, after that, he brings the apostle back to us, as we said before, for that one said that, in that wonderful kidnapping, he didn't know "whether he was into body or outside body", for the Ghost caused the forgetfulness of all the aspects related to body. "If the forgetfulness is of everyone, says the philosopher, then also the untold sweetness and warmth, which I have found out that they take place within hesychasts, the Ghost will make them forgotten by His coming, but He won't produce those. And, doubtlessly, if the phenomena which happen within him are gifts from God, it will be wrong to say that he who truly prays must forget about all things. This is for no one must forget the things given him by God towards good. And if one must forget these things, how won't be absurd to be God reckoned as the unmediated cause of the things whose absence and forgetfulness are better for prayer?"

The fact that most of the gifts of the Ghost, and almost all of them, those gifts occur within the worthy one in time of prayer, anyone who cogitate rightly will know that surely. This is for, the Lord says: "Ask for, and it will be given to you" (Mt. 7: 7). So, not only this kidnapping, and this only to the third sky, but such are any of the gifts of the Ghost. And the fact that some of them are worked through the body too, it is shown by

of Abraham, for the powerful of the earth belong to God; He has been very extolled." (E. l. t.'s n.)

³⁷⁵ The works committed within saints aren't irrational works, as those works seem to be, but they are above-rationality, namely they are of a complex rationality, a rationality that isn't fragmentary, as there is the rationality of the processes of the nature, processes which end in decomposition, and therefore they bear within themselves, as finality, the nonsense.

³⁷⁶ (Added by E. l. t.'s n.)

³⁷⁷ (Vid supra)

the kinds of the languages and of their interpretations, which are also received through and into prayer, as Paul says: "He who speaks into languages, let him pray to interpret them" (1 Cor. 15: 13). And not only these ones, but also the word of the teaching and the gifts of the healing and the deeds of the powers and the laying on of the hands of Paulk (2 Cor. 1: 6), which the witness of the Holy Ghost was brought through. It is right that the word of the teaching, the grace and the interpretation of the languages, though they are born out of prayer, they might work also in case the prayer is absent within soul. But the healings and the powers couldn't reach their work if the soul of him who works each of them didn't pray, in the first place with him mind, but sometimes giving sound with the body too. But the impartation with the Ghost is works only when the prayer is present within soul – namely when that prayer that mysteriously commits the union of him who prays with the uncreates spring of that great gift -, so, only when is present that prayer that is worked with the mind; this is for, one cannot tell what the apostles were uttering with their mouths, on those occasions (Acts 18: 1); so, the impartation is worked not only when the soul prays with the mind, but also when the body works too, through the hands which share the Ghost, by touching him who are under his hands. So, what are those gifts? Aren't they gifts from the Ghost, and aren't they given those who asked for them and who pray for them, towards better, for the reason that they who are kidnapped to the third sky must forget about all the things he done through their bodies?³⁷⁸

14. But let's better give here the philosopher's words themselves: "If the things happening within them during prayer, as these powers and gifts, are gifts from God, it is wrong to say that he who prays within his mind, he must forget about all things. This is because no one must forgive the things given by

³⁷⁸ Barlaam found in the words of Saint Apostle Paul – that he was kidnapped to the third sky, so that he no longer knew if he was into his body or outside his body – a ground for his idea that he who prays he must forgive about everything, so that he must liberate himself from all the works, to break up with all the works. Saint Gregory Palamas, at his turn, he evoked the deeds committed by Saint Apostle Paul as a proof for the fact that, during the prayer of the mind, into body and through body, there take place clean states and deeds, which are crossed through by the godlike grace. The prayer is to Saint Gregory Palamas, a deed of power, one shown into body and through body, and it is not a state and work of the soul separated from the body.

God towards good. And if he who is elevated through prayer, he owes to forget all of these, how comes that it is not wrong to say that God is the cause of those things whose forgetfulness and absence are better to prayer?”.

But, oh you the wonderful one! Them who pray sincerely, God sometimes gets them out of themselves, by elevating them above themselves, and by kidnapping them, in an untold manner, to havens; some other times, while they are within themselves, God Himself works through their body and soul, the realities which are mysterious and above-nature and not-understood by wiseman of the present age. And, actually, to the apostles who were yore persevering in praying and asking, in the upper room, by coming the Ghost, He didn't give them, as gift, to get out of themselves (ecstasy), neither the Ghost kidnapped them to heavens, but the Ghost opened their mouths through the fire tongues, and through them was the Ghost speaking the things which must be forgotten by them who reach the ecstasy, if they must forget about themselves³⁷⁹.

When Moses is silent, God says: “What do you shout out towards Me for?” (Exod. 14: 15). This word shows that Moses was praying himself. But, Moses by praying thus, wasn't him in feeling and didn't he feel the shouts of his people and the danger that was menacing them or, didn't he feel that seen staff he held in his hand? Therefore, how God didn't kidnap him, neither God detached Moses from his senses – because you argue that only this is given by God to them who pray – but God pushed Moses towards that staff and God instilled power not only into Moses's soul, but into his body too, and into his hand too, which you affirm about, that he who prays with him mind he must forget about all of them? And, while that one was silent, didn't he hit the sea with the staff he held in his hand, first in order to split it, and then in order to united the sea after their crossing? Didn't he have in his soul the unscattered remembrance of God and, wasn't him united, through the

³⁷⁹ But Barlaam found in the words of Saint Apostle Paul, namely that he forgot whether he was into body or not, also a reason to argue that the states and the deeds crossed through by grace, they aren't gifts from God, because the gifts from God mustn't ne forgotten. Everything that takes place within body, regardless how clean, was thrown by Barlaam into the bin; he retained only the speculation. Palamas noticed that they who are praying, they won't be all of them kidnapped, but some of them will be left, by God, in works given them by Himself, as gifts. The prayer isn't a simple “meditation”, but it is struggle, it is a straining of the entire being.

prayer of the mind, with The One Who was the Only One Who could work through Moses, while Moses didn't lack the feeling of the works which were done through his body?

15. But because he brought also witnesses from writings, let's see: aren't those witnesses contrary as well, to his opinions about prayer? Before all, he brought the Great Dionysus who would be, as he reckons, a together-confessor for his opinions, for he wrote towards Saint Timothy: "By persevering, strongly, around the mysterious views, you will leave also the feelings and the works of the mind and all the ones which are submitted to senses and to mind, and you will stretch yourself, as much as possible, towards the union with The One Who is above any being and knowledge"³⁸⁰. But itself this word of advice, sent by the godlike Dionysus to Timothy – a word that this wiseman brought it as proof in order to show that only he cogitates without any mistake about the prayer of the mind – it shows him, as the following word is going to present it, as one who totally abolishes the prayer of the mind, as he has been doing through all his previous words. This is because, he who rejects the beginning of the prayer, that is the state of fear and of deep pain, one full of much sighing into the crushing of the heart, due to the sadness for longing after God, and the prayer with tears and with the pricking of the heart, accompanied by the pain of the fasting and of the lack of sleeping into the sense of the touching, and the duty of the beginners to elevate the divided mind to a more unified, and therefore appropriate, prayer, he who despises all of these will reckon, consequently, also the end of the prayer and, simply, the entire prayer, as something bad, and he will fight to consummately abolish the prayer³⁸¹.

You tell me this, in the first place, oh, you the philosopher: aren't either the works of the (understanding) mind given from God, or, aren't they shown during prayer as cleaner than ever and, must him - who hurries up towards the godlike union – leave these ones too? But the prayer is, as I said before,

³⁸⁰ *About the Mystical Theology* 1: 1; G.P. 3: 997 B.

³⁸¹ Fearing of God, the humiliation, the fasting, and the other deeds of this kind, they depend on prayer insomuch that Saint Gregory Palamas reckoned them as the beginning of the prayer. Actually, itself the fear of God and the full of repentance pricking of the heart, they are a phasis of the prayer; the prayer speaks to God and he who prays, he feels God speaking and working within his heart. Thus, the prayer is a state of great emotion; the prayer is loaded with the fullness of the being in state of repentance, or humbleness, and of hope.

“the mother of the all-wise cogitations”³⁸². Then we must also cogitate that, more than anything, the prayer of the consummate ones it is a work of the mind. This is for, the mind of ones like these ones, by not being focused either on the body or on the realities from around them, by not working either through feeling or through the feeling’s companion: the imagination, and by not tarrying either into the rationalities of the things through cogitation and contemplation, by persevering only into prayer, how would they not work, as full as possible, within themselves, by praying? But Dionysus urged Timothy to leave the works of the mind too, and, therefore, the prayer too. And you declare that there is nothing good, neither from God into prayers, and in all the ones who are forsaken and as many as one must no longer feel them, when he has exited from himself into an ecstasy towards the high ones. Therefore, according to you, the prayer isn’t a good thing, neither it is from God Who give prayer to him who prays?³⁸³

16. But I am reminding, again, your words, applying them to the prayer of the mind: “Being confessed by anybody, that he who strives himself towards the godlike union he must be without feeling towards anything, and he must forget about himself, and God gives His hand to one like this one, in order him to be freed from all things and God kidnaps him out of all things”, if he who prays no longer has any feeling of the prayer, how could be from God the prayer he doesn’t feel? This is because, this feeling would be vain, and nothing is vain out of God. And if he who prays, he feels the prayer, how could the prayer that is instilled him by God, because you say that he who turns himself towards God, he must liberate himself of prayer too, once God gives as gift, him whom He unveils into light, the forgetfulness of all things, even of the works of the mind? Can you see what your words “About Prayer” abolish like, consummately, the prayer? But that saint, by urging saint

³⁸² Diadochus, *Heads*, 70; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume I, p. 365.

³⁸³ Barlaam, quoting Dionysus who said that, in the union with God, the mind must leave the prayer too, he deduced that, because everything that must be forsake it is something bad, and therefore it isn’t from God, the prayer is bad too, and therefore the prayer is not from God. Palamas admits that in the union with God, the soul is elevated even above prayer. But from here one must not deduce that the prayer would be bad, neither that the prayer isn’t necessary to the who want to reach the union with God. And even like some kind of supreme emotional awareness of the presence of God and of our dependence on God’s mercy and love, the prayer remains even on the stage of our union with God.

Timothy to place stairs within his heart (Ps. 83: 6), he elevated him from high things to higher things and, by leading him through those higher things, he placed him on the highest peak.

But you, wiseman in all things, I do not know how could you imagine that the ones from earth reach, directly, the heavenly height³⁸⁴. You bring the godlike Maximos too, as your witness, for he said: "When, lit up by love, the mind got out of itself towards God, the mind no longer feels either itself, or the things"³⁸⁵. "Therefore, says this teacher, it no longer feels either the feelings which are produced by that prayer into body. The necessary conclusion is that those take place vainly". But we could say: so, the prayer is vain too, for it won't be felt then, as well. So, according to these words, praying is futile. But truly futile and insane it is to draw such conclusions out of the affirmation belonging to Saint Maximos. But one might ask: What does Saint Maximos say - for he praised and loved more than anything, the godlike love - by the words: "When the mind has exited, from itself, towards God, then the mind won't feel either on itself of the things"? "Then" - he says. But while the mind is in itself, praying mentally, the mind feels on itself and it feels the blessed feelings which occur in itself and within the body united with the mind, due to the holy prayer.

17. But the philosopher brings as argument for his opinion, also a third witness from that one: "The highest state of the prayer consists of reaching the mind out of body and out of world and of being the mind totally immaterial and shapeless during prayer"³⁸⁶. 'So, it will be, as the philosopher concludes, in this state, outside even from the feeling from within body, which I am speaking about". But, as far as we know, amongst those who are dressed up into body, no one is ceaselessly imparted with such a state, except, maybe, for this new teacher of the prayer. And even they who are rarely imparted with it,

³⁸⁴ The Barlaam's opinion, soaked with the theory of the prayer as purely intellectual meditation, it was that the prayer of the mind doesn't need the steps of the virtues as climbed tiresomely, in order to reach the union with God. To him, this union was a state of theological intellectual apophatism, a simple union of the mind with all the known ideas - a theoretical denial of all affirmations in order to have the exact meaning of God as above all affirmations. But this would mean to be united with God through a pure intellectual procedure. And that doesn't need the crossing through the stages of the virtues and of the prayer.

³⁸⁵ *Heads about Love I*: 10; G.P. 90: 964 A. *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 38.

³⁸⁶ *Heads about Love II*: 61; G.P. 90: 1001 D. *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 68.

they are very rare too. So, the most part of the time everyone pray while being into body and experiencing, in the same time, the feelings from within themselves. How much more then, they won't feel the sanctifies and produced by prayer feeling, which the prayer consummates and elevates and makes them spiritual within them which they are in, and do not lower them, neither make them evil nor corrupt them? This is because, there is also such a sort of feelings, not only not sanctified, but natural, as we are taught by themselves the feelings we have, which are being consummated when we experience the external realities and which are like some images of the deifying consummation produced by the Holy Ghost, from above³⁸⁷.

The beginning of that consummation is the fear of God (Proverbs 1: 7; 9: 10). Out of these ones, one can see that the passionate part of the soul isn't mortified through habituation, as the philosopher thinks and teaches, but it advances to a loving-of-God work, it gains the savior pricking and the blessed crying which brings the bath of the forgiveness, the renewal of the birth out of God, namely the tears of the repentance³⁸⁸.

This loving-of-God and useful tear, it wings up the prayer³⁸⁹, according to the words of the fathers, it illuminated the eyes of the mind, when it is united with the prayer, it preserves the grace from the godlike bath, according to Gregory the Theologian³⁹⁰, and it will bring the grace back if lost, and that's why it is called as the second bath of the holy rebirth and of the second godlike baptism, which is more painful, and it is not less important than the first baptism but it is rather

³⁸⁷ Saint Gregory Palamas knows that, besides the feelings produced by the Ghost, within body, during prayer, there are also those which are natural to be body but which are sanctified by the Ghost during prayer; namely, he knows besides the extraordinary charismas produced by the Ghost (the gift of the healing etc.), also a state of cleanness of all the natural movements from within body (the clean joy, the clean crying, the need for food kept within the limits of the cleanness etc.). Among these last ones, there are also the clean feeling of the external realities. They are sanctified, during prayer, by the Holy Ghost. But they are only some images of the deifying consummation, and not the consummation itself of the state of deification.

³⁸⁸ It is again affirmed here, the fact that the passionate side must not be mortified. On the opposite, only by increasing it, by living ever more intensely God, and our own sinfulness, one can achieve the closeness to God and advances towards consummation.

³⁸⁹ John Climacus, *The Ladder* XXVIII; G.P. 88: 1132 C. The tear wings up the prayer for it represents a state of humiliation and of repentance in front of God Who is a spring of the prayer. The tear illuminates the eyes of the mind, for it makes the mind seeing, due to the humbleness and intense feeling of the own sinfulness, the godlike presence and glory.

³⁹⁰ *Word* no. 40: 31; G.P. 36: 401 D – 404 A.

greater. For that was declared someone amongst fathers, saying: “The spring of the tears from after baptism it is greater than Baptism”. And this tear that cleans and kidnaps from the earthly things and it elevates and it unites with the grace of that birth out of God, and by that it deified him who has that tear, isn’t a common work of the body and of the passionate side of the soul?

18. How, then, could we agree him who says that “the soul, by loving the common works of his and of the passionate side of the body, they are filled up with darkness and they are lowered to the lower ones? This is because, all the deeds which are common to the soul and to the body, the more they are noticed by the soul, the more they blind the soul up, so that, if there place such works have taken within us – works which are common both to soul and body – I will reckon that those works will have taken place also towards damaging the work which the mind ascends towards the realities from above through”.

Isn’t him shown, by these words, as cogitating and teaching the things which are contrary to us, for we have been taught by saints, of better said, by the Holy Ghost? This is for the saints say that there is a common work of the soul and of the body, but truly godlike too, one that produces to the soul the godlike illumination, and that delivers both the soul and the body from the evil passions, and it brings to them, instead, the whole holy choir of the virtues. “This is for, he says, he who wants to remove his passions, he gets rid of them through crying; and he who wants to gain virtues, he achieves them by crying”³⁹¹. Therefore, the saints tell us that there are works common to the soul and body, which are rather useful to the soul. But the philosopher says that there is none. “This is because all of them, he says, they make the soul look downwards, and all the movements which are common to soul and body, they take place towards bad and towards damaging the soul”.

The philosopher won’t be absolved either by not declaring, especially, this work as damaging, but he will be found guilty for placing this work too, amongst the bad works; and especially for he attempted stealing the consent of the listeners through such trick. This is because God says through the prophet: “The lawlessness of the priests condemned amongst Jews, it is that

³⁹¹ Isaac the Syrian, *Word* no. 85, editor Teotochi.

of not discerning between the holy and the unclean” (Exod. 22: 16). And the philosopher, together with other many works common to soul and body, he hasn’t discerned between the blessed weeping and the unclean works.

19. “But, he says, I do not reckon this weeping as dispassionate and blessed. This is because, what could be dispassionate like, what is done through the work of the suffering (passionate) side of the soul? And what could be dispassionate like, he who maintains in working the suffering (passionate) side of his soul and who hasn’t consummately killed that one, through habituation?”.

But we haven’t learnt, oh you the philosopher, that the dispassion means killing the passionate side, but we have learnt that it means moving the passionate side from the evil things to the good things, and it means directing its work, through habituation, towards the godlike things, after it has been totally turned away from the evil things towards the good things. And, to us it is dispassionate him who has lost his habits and who has enriched himself in good things, “he who has been imprinted by virtues, like the passionate ones are imprinted by evil pleasures”³⁹², he who has obeyed his wrath and lust – which together compose the passionate side of the soul – to the soul’s knowing and judging and rational power, like they who are addicted, they have obeyed their rational power to their passionate side. This is because, the bad employment of the soul’s powers it is the one that gives birth to the passions which are worthy of disapproval, and like the bad employment of the knowledge about things it gives birth to the crazy wisdom³⁹³.

And if somebody uses his wrath and lust well, by knowing the things understood spiritually, he gains the knowledge about God, through the passionate side of his soul, when his soul moves for what he was created by God for, by working the corresponding virtues: through lust, he achieves the love within

³⁹² John Climacus, *The Ladder* XXIX; G.P. 88: 1149 A.

³⁹³ The dispassion isn’t, in the teaching of the Holy Fathers, a negative state, one of insensitiveness, as there would be Buddhism, but it is a state of positive employment of the souly powers, namely of the wrath and of the lust. And for this good employment requires an intense effort, the dispassion implied more power than the passionate state does. Barlaam gave important only to speculation, not to the sanctification of the believer too, including here that of the body. Barlaam represented the Occidental mentality that mainly stressed the theology as theory, and not the consummation of the believer.

his heart, and through his wrath, he achieved patience. Therefore, not him who has killed this side of his soul – because, if that was the case, he would be motionless and unworking even towards godlike habits, affections, and moods –, but him who has take it into submission, for, by obeying it to the mind – that has received, by nature, the leading, from God –, to be lest as it ought, and by that to tend reaching the habituation of the godlike disposition, and to elevate it on the most consummate level. And this is the love for God, which the mind received through – according to eth mentioned word – the commandments of the beloved One, and out of this it learns, it works, and it achieved the clean and consummate love towards the neighbor, which the dispassion is impossible not to be together with too³⁹⁴.

20. This way towards the consummate love through dispassion, it is freely open and it ascends towards the realities from above, and it matches especially them who have withdrawn themselves from the world. This is for, once they have dedicated themselves to God and they persevere, with an undisturbed mind, in the dialogue with Him, through this together-living, they easily reject the burden of the evil passions and they gather up the treasure of the love. And they who are moving themselves within world, they owe that, by forcing themselves, to use the things from within world according to the commandments of God. In this case, also the passionate side of their soul, by participating to this effort, it will work according to those commandments. And this effort, by being prolonged through habituation, it will produce a sweet affection towards the godlike commandments and it will transform the pleasant disposition towards them, in habit. This habit, at its turn, it will cause a steadfast hatred towards the evil habits and affections.

³⁹⁴ Through the good employment of the lust, one achieves the love for God, and through the good employment of the wrath – which, together with the lust, they compose the passionate side – one achieves the patience. And they are well employed when they obey to the mind. The mind, by ceaselessly remembering God, and by being accompanied by the lust in this undertaking, they both get habituated to love God. And by patiently fulfilling the commandments, one reaches to love his neighbor, and that implies a great spiritual strength. But this cannot exist without dispassion, without renouncing to the egotistic love for oneself, and to his inferior pleasures. That love that implies the dispassion, or the suffering that conditions the love, they do not have, consequently, nothing negative within them. They are instilled by an impulse of the love for God and for the neighbor, of the love for everything that is good, namely by an impulse opposed to any egotism. But the love, which the positive dispassion is involved in, it would be impossible, if the feeling side of our nature was killed.

And this hatred against the evil habits it brings forth the dispassion, out of which is born the love for The-Only-One-Good³⁹⁵. By living and by working thus, they can show to God the passionate side of their soul as a living sacrifice, as the apostle too, he said about our body: “I urge you, through the mercifulness of God, to show your bodies as living, holy, and well-pleasant to God sacrifice” (Rom. 12: 1). How can we present our body, while it is still living, as a well-pleasant sacrifice to God?³⁹⁶ When our eyes see the things as smooth, according to what was written: “He who sees the things smooth, he will be saved” (Prov. 12: 13) – for they will attracts us and they will makes us joyful, when our ears are submitted to the godlike teachings, not only in order to hear those teachings, but, according to David’s word, to remember the commandments of God in order to keep them (Ps. 102: 18³⁹⁷), by not becoming “listeners who forget”, according to the word of the brother of the Lord from amongst apostles, “but looking from close at the consummate law of the freedom and persevering into it and becoming happy in his work” (Jas. 2: 25), when, finally, the tongue, the hands, and the legs serve the will of God. What are, therefore, these works of the commandments of God? Aren’t all of them works common both to soul and body? Then, what the

³⁹⁵ Saint Gregory Palamas reckons that the monks are the easiest to reach the dispassion. Still, the dispassion isn’t forbidden to the laymen. The main means the laymen have, in order to use it on this purpose, it is their effort to use the things from within world according to the commandments of God, namely towards fulfilling all the good things and towards loving the neighbor. By prolonging this kind of employment, the laymen reach to get habituated to this good usage of the things of the world and to the aversion towards the bad usage of them, or towards the passionate usage of them.

³⁹⁶ The fact that we can bring our body as sacrifice to God, while our body is still alive, Saint Gregory reckons it as an argument for the body not to be mortified, for our body is loved by God as sacrifice as alive as it is. The expression “living sacrifice” is only apparently a contradictory expression. But this expression shows that the body can be offered to God as sacrifice just in the fullness of the life from the body, namely strengthened through love and through doing good deeds into patience.

³⁹⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 103: 17-19: “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children; // To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. // The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 102: 17-19: “And the mercy of the Lord from age to age towards them who fear Him, // and His righteousness towards their sons, towards them who keep His covenant // And who remember His commandments, in order to fulfill them. The Lord in heavens has prepared His chair and His Kingdom masters over all.”

works common both to soul and body fill up like, with darkness, and they make the soul blind?

21. And the apostle says: "Who is weak and I won't be weak? Who is offended and I won't burn?" (2 Cor. 11: 29). Isn't it, this work, common to the body and to the passionate side of the soul? Actually, it is the sure sign that somebody loves his neighbor as on himself. And this is the second commandment of God, like the first and the greatest commandment (Mt. 22: 36 and the followings). That's why, the same apostle, writing to the Romans, he says: "It is great sadness to me and it is ceaseless pain to my heart, because of my kins according to the body" (Rom. 9: 2 and the followings). Do you see that it is alive and working, the passionate side of that dispassionate and godlike soul?³⁹⁸

And if that soul was ceaselessly praying and he was ceaselessly pained (1 Thes. 1: 3; 2: 13; 5: 17; Rom. 9: 2), of course he had in himself the pain united with his prayers. And he had that pain not only together-existing but also together-working. This was shown by the same ones, saying: "... I would have wanted to be myself anathema from Christ, for my brothers" (Rom. 13: 3), as he showed by what he said somewhere else: "The benevolence of my heart and my ask towards God, they are for Israel, towards salvation" (Rom. 10: 1), of course, he said that because of that great sadness and ceaseless pain he felt because of them. What we will reckon like, therefore, as dispassion, the killing of the passionate side through detachment?

22. But, as it seems like, the philosopher heard and imagined something about dispassion. But he didn't hear about the lack of pain that it is from the evil one and that it is despised by fathers? So, there is too a good pain, one opposed to the absence of the pain; likewise, there are works common both to soul and body, which are beneficial to the soul, better said they consummate the soul, it that consummation comes by keeping the commandments. And if these ones are deeds of the body, all the more they belong to the passionate side of the soul

³⁹⁸ The passionate side of the soul remains alive and working also in the dispassionate soul, as well as in that soul that is "dispassionate" in the bad meaning of this word. So, the dispassionate isn't him who is numbed and indolent, but is him who is dispassionate, worriless, or insensitive to evil. One can be very passionate about what he is doing, while still being dispassionate. The good and the beautiful passion reconciles to the passionate or suffering side. Example is the pain felt by Paul for his nation.

that is united with the mind in an unmediated manner. This is for, the body is united, through its mediation, with the mind³⁹⁹.

And the philosopher does something similar to that one who, if he heard God commanding: "Rest yourselves and know that I am God" (Ps. 45: 10⁴⁰⁰), and then he would see them who rest themselves into the godlike and spiritual realities, and he would rebuke them⁴⁰¹, saying: "God said: rest yourselves; therefore you, by hurrying yourself up to work, you go astray". "Kill, says the apostle, your limbs from on earth: the fornication, the uncleanness, the evil passion, and the greediness" (1 Cor. 1: 3). Do you hear someone amongst the body's works that must be mortified? The fornication, the uncleanness, and, simply speaking, all the earthly things. And what passion? The evil passion. So, not the works of the Ghost committed through the body, neither the godlike and blessed sufferings (the affects), nor the powers of the soul created for those ones. This is for, it is said; "Let the whole lusting power of yours, to be directed towards God; let your wrath to be only against the snake. But if these powers of the soul were mortified, what could some of them move like, towards the godlike height, in the prayers towards God, or what could one of them rise like, against the snake and its inappropriate attacks?"⁴⁰².

23. And what it will be sure like, what the philosopher says: "But how? Will we despise the feeling and the imagination when we pray, while still allowing the passionate side of the soul to work? Won't we despise this one even more strongly? This is for, the works of this one blind up and burry the godlike eye more than everything".

³⁹⁹ The passionate side mediates between mind and body. Without the passionate side, the mind won't be able to work upon the soul. The body is led towards consummation, by the mind, through the passionate side, but also the mind actualizes its spiritualization powers, or power for sanctifying the body, through the passionate side. This is for, through the passionate side, the mind works upon the body.

⁴⁰⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 46: 10: "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."; in ROB we have: Ps. 45: 10: "Stop yourselves and know that I am God, I will exalt Myself on earth."

⁴⁰¹ Resting into the godlike ones (from the things of the sin) it means working into the godlike realities. The resting into God and the good work through the powers one received by uniting himself with God, they are the same. Barlaam didn't see that. He reckoned that even the working of the good deeds, or of the godlike things, it means transgressing the commandment of God Who asks us to "rest" ourselves into Him. We are meeting here the same abstract, unworking conception about salvation.

⁴⁰² John Climacus, *The Ladder*, XXIX; G.P. 88: 1068 D.

What can he say like, that the hatred towards the evil things, and the love for God and for the neighbor, they burry the godlike eye? For, these works too, they belong to the passionate side of the soul. This is for, with this power of our soul we love and we reject too, we bring closer to us and we remove from us; as, through the rational power of our soul, according to the wise Synesius, we song and we rebuke. Does he mortify his cogitating power, he who occupies himself with the godlike contemplations and raises singing thanks to God and attaches himself to God? Isn't that the true live and the true work of the mind? Likewise, they who love the good things, they do not mortify either the passionate side, by locking it within themselves, and so to become unworking and motionless. Because, if that was the case, they wouldn't have what to love the good and to hate the evil with, neither what they to estrange themselves through, from the evil, and to come close to God. They mortify that side only in the sense that they move the whole their tendency towards the love for God⁴⁰³, and so they change the tendency they had before towards the evil things – according to the first and greatest commandment: “You will love your Lord God with the whole your strength”, namely with the whole your power. What the whole your power is? Doubtlessly, it is the loving part of your soul. And this one, by receiving such a tendency, it detaches the other powers of the soul too, from the earthly things, and it elevates them towards God. By receiving this tendency, it provides the prayer with sincerity. And it doesn't fence up the mind, but it collaborates as well with the mind, having God deeply dwelling within it, by remembrance. By receiving this tendency, it gives as a gift, to them who suffer the longing for The One Who is truly worthy to be desired, also the power for despising the body and to more easily enduring the pains⁴⁰⁴. This is for, through this suffering

⁴⁰³ Like they who attach themselves to God by ceaselessly remembering God, they do not modify their cogitating power, likewise, they do not mortify their passionate power in the sense that they would lock it up within themselves, and make it unworking and motionless. But, from another point of view, this still is a mortification. This is for, they move their tendency and their work from the evil things towards the things which are conform to the love for God and fore the neighbor. Saint Gregory attributes two meanings, to mortification: the meaning of not tending towards evil things, and the meaning of total unworking. He admits the first kind of mortification, while rejecting the other one.

⁴⁰⁴ In the passionate side there is a force that can become a force of love for God and for neighbor. The force of that love can become so great, so that he who has achieved it can place

side, by being they consumed, up to the peak, by the love for God, and by being they somehow estranged from their body, they are imparted, through prayer and love, with the godlike Ghost, and by that they continue to feel the passions only in order to judge them⁴⁰⁵.

24. But what to write more on these? It is obvious to everyone, despite not being clear to this wiseman too, that we have been commanded to crucify our body with its passions and lusts (Gal. 5: 24), and not to commit suicide by killing all the work of our soul and all the power of our soul, but, on one hand, to liberate ourselves from all the lusts and form all the evil deed, and we to make definitive our running away from those, and on the other hand, we to make ourselves men of the lusts of the Ghost, as Daniel (Dan. 5: 23), by living and by moving ourselves within them with a consummate thought and manly walking ever ahead as Lot who left Sodom. This is for, by walking ever ahead, and by remaining unmoved towards the things from before, he kept himself alive, while his wife, turning herself backwards, she died.

I am reckoning, therefore, that we have shown enough, the fact that the passionate ones they keep alive and working the passionate side of their soul, and they do not mortify it.

25. But let now see how this philosopher, despite using the whole his smartness against the introductory explanation to prayer, as formulated by Pious Nicephorus, he still was unable to do anything but to calumniate, to crook them up, and to gossip them, and so he damaged himself and his words, through these calumnies, and not on that Pious. In the first place, when starting, he uses against that man the lie that he was the first to compose such explanations, which he called, mockingly, inspirations (εἰσπνοαί). This is because, many years before Nicephorus, these aspects were explained by other spiritual men, and with almost the same ideas and words and in the writings of all the holy fathers, one can find many words testifying about these aspects. So is the word of him who composed to us, by words, the spiritual *Ladder*. "Let the

it above what the body likes, and even above his earthly life, in order to gain a deified and eternal life.

⁴⁰⁵ Consumed by the love for God and estranged from their body, they who live in prayer and in continual appeasing, they still feel the sufferings of their bodies, but only in order they to judge those suffering whether those sufferings aren't totally clean, or in order they to realize that they haven't reached yet, the eternal happiness of the future life.

memory of Jesus stuck with your breath, and then you will now the benefit of the quietude (hesychia)”⁴⁰⁶.

According to the philosopher, because that Pious says: “Force your mind to enter your heart, together with the inhaled air”, namely to attach itself to this one and to look within your heart (and in this he follows to Great Makarios who says: “The heart masters the whole organism and when the grace takes the stretches of the heart into his mastery, the grace will master upon all limbs and thoughts; therefore, one must look over there, if the grace has written the laws of the Ghost”) – for the Pious co-speaks, therefore, in all aspects, with these great fathers, while the philosopher gossips though calumny. Ad by separating the words “force” from the word “mind”, it ties it on the “inhaled air”. And thus crooking, in a calumnious mode, together with the words, the meanings too, then he blows, powerfully, against the forced inhaling, showing that those are totally absurd.

That one, again, by calling as mind the works of the mind and, by saying that is necessary that these works - because of being overflowed outwardly by senses – they must be brought back, so that they to occupy themselves with the prayer to come back as well, this philosopher again calumniates the Pious for he speaks about the being of the mind. And so on, the philosopher imagined that he could use many quotes against the pious words.

26. And because we again clarify the truth, he has nothing left to say, except: “Let our words be teaching to them who will be struck by these absurd expressions”.

But you, who teach things which you haven’t understood – as somebody could tell to this teacher – have you been struck, or you haven’t? If you have been stricken, how could you pretend to be a teacher in this regard, since you needed somebody to teach you, and since you have learnt the truth from us? And if you haven’t been struck, how could you curse - because of something that is only an external expression to you – him who doesn’t place in it any absurd meaning? And what are you cursing him for: not because he said it wrongly, but because he cogitates it wrongly? And if that one wronged in both ways, how comes that you, who are his accuser, by going around the meaning, you have started only against what is

⁴⁰⁶ *The Ladder*, XXVII; G.P. 88: 1112 C.

external expression? You had to, therefore, if you guarded yourself against the mistake from the words, and if you taught others how to guard themselves too, you to praise the meaning and the author of the meaning and to make yourself not an accuser of those words, but an explainer. This is because, if somebody things that he expresses what is in the external words, will he reckon that him who commands the mortification of the body he teaches the people to kill themselves, will he get that one out – if not changing his mind – from the condemnation of the faithless ones? I reckon that he won't.

But what can you do when Basil the Great – I to use an example close to the aspect you condemn – he says that the mind must be overflowed outside and to be again gathered? Do you suspect him of evil, as one who says that the unmovable being of the mind must be overflowed, and because he says that the one that never forsakes on itself, must be gathered, or will you understand that he calls as mind the works of the mind which are in motion, whatever they would be?

27. But the philosopher, because of being forbidden to accuse on the basis of the external words, by our arguments which exposed him, he decided to wholly rush against the meaning, and by directing his fight against the things we wrote in the defense of that pious man, he hasn't forgotten, either this time, about his calumnious craftsmanship, or, better said, he hasn't been able to. This is because, how could he contradict the uncontradictable affirmations, due to the truth from within them, and to accuse them of the heresy's sin, without cover them up in calumnies?

So, we, by saying that the heart is a bodily organ of the mind, according to Great Makarios, from whom we quoted there the words which shows that⁴⁰⁷, the philosopher, by overlooking the word "bodily" and by quoting the godlike Gregory of Nyssa who says that "the being of the mind mixes itself with the thin and luminous element of the sensitive nature"⁴⁰⁸, the philosopher concludes that Saint Gregory says that it uses this element as a prime organ, and, inconsequently, he rushes upon our sayings, by affirming that our sayings would be contrary to what the saint says, once we argue that the heart, and not that

⁴⁰⁷ See *Word II from the First Ones*, at Fr. D. Stăniloae, *The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas*, p. IV.

⁴⁰⁸ *About the Creation of the Man* 8; G.P. 44: 145 C.

luminous element, it is the first organ of the mind. But if you added, oh, you the sophist, the word “bodily”, as we said, you would forsake the opposition you uphold, and you would see the saints co-speaking amongst themselves, and us together with them, for we are taught by them. Isn’t a body, the luminous element of the human feeling?

28. But the philosopher contrived another contradiction too, between our words and the sayings of Gregory of Nyssa. This is because we do not say that the heart is an organ of the organs from within body, and so the mind, through the heart, it uses the body as an organ, the philosopher says that we affirm that it is known the union between mind and body, while Gregory of Nyssa declares it as not-understood. But what is when Gregory of Nyssa says that the sensitiveness is united with the power of growth that stays in the middle between the being of the mind and that one that is more material, and then that there takes place the mixing of the mind with the thinner part of the sensitiveness⁴⁰⁹, for the mind uses that as a prime organ and through it the body too? Didn’t he do more than we did, and much more than us, as cognoscible and expressible the mode of the union between mind and body? How can the philosopher say, then, that this union is not-understood and untold? Do you reckon, into your wisdom, that he contradicts himself, as well? And how won’t be him like you are, if you reckon that he follows you? But I reckon that we can talk about a touching (ἐπαφήν) between these ones, and about using (of the body by the soul) and about mixing (with one another). What is, though, and what it is done like, this connection between a mental nature and a bodily nature – or a body –, it remains, by and large, to all people, as a not-understood thing. So, the fathers agree to one another and we agree them.

But you, the philosopher, you who rejoice of contradictions, naturally, you want to believe that the fathers too, they contradict each other. That’s why you resist us too, for we show the fathers as agreeing to one another.

29. This is for, the Great Makarios, by being him taught by the work of the grace, and him by teaching us that that the mind and all the thoughts of the soul are within heart as into an organ, and Gregory of Nyssa teaching us that the mind, as incorporeal, it isn’t inside the body, we, by putting these

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

affirmations together, though the seemingly differ from one another, and we, by showing that they aren't actually opposed to one another, we say that though the mind isn't inside, for it is immaterial, according to Gregory of Nyssa, we say too that the mind is inside too, but not outside the body, for the mind is united with the body and for the mind uses the heart in an untold manner, for the heart is the prime bodily organ, according to Makarios the Great. So, because, from a point of view, that one says that the mind isn't inside, and because, from another point of view, this one says that the mind is inside, we still reckon that they do not differ in anything. This is for, neither him who says that the Godhead isn't in space, he doesn't oppose him who says that the Word of God dwelled yore inside the virginal and all-righteous womb, as One Who united Himself there, above word, with our dough, for His untold love for people⁴¹⁰.

30. But you, for we hurry up to show that those two don't differ, you hurry up to show that we differ from them, though, about such things as how the mind is united with the body, where are the imagination and the judgment, what place the memory has, whether there is within body an essential passion and somehow leading, and where it has the blood its beginning from, and whether each juice is unmixed, and which of the entrails (glands) are used as a vessel, and all the other aspects related to them, everyone are allowed to say what they reckon, because all of them say verisimilar things; likewise, anyone can say what he reckons about the movement or about the stillness of the stars, about the nature and the size of each of them,

⁴¹⁰ The whole content of the present treaty belonging to Saint Gregory Palamas, it tackles with the problem of the union between soul and body. He affirms this union, by reckoning the passionate side as being somehow common both to soul and body. Barlaam wants to weaken this connection, in order him to be able to reject the repercussion of the mind's closeness to God, upon the body, and therefore the sanctification of the body. In this sense, he would want to oppose Saint Gregory of Nyssa too, to the affirmations made by *Palamas in his Treaty II* from the *First Triad*. After he opposed that one's declaration that the soul isn't inside body, now he is opposing that one's declaration that that union is non-understood (Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *quoted work*, 15; G.P. 44: 177 B), as also that declaration that the mind is united with the body through a thinner sensitiveness. Saint Gregory Palamas is showing that, actually, neither Saint Gregory of Nyssa doesn't contest the union between soul and body and a certain possibility of knowing and of expressing this union. Saint Gregory Palamas reconciles the apparent contradictory affirmations of Saint Gregory of Nyssa and of Makarios the Great, concerning the presence of the soul within body. This is for, on one hand, the soul is within body, while, on the other hand, the soul isn't within body, by being present differently than a material element.

about everything that hasn't been yet clearly revealed to us by the Ghost, the Only One Who knows the truth that crosses through all of them.

So, even if you are in contradiction with the godlike and wise Gregory of Nyssa, you won't necessarily need to start this against us. Think at how many tell you that the sky is a sphere and they speak about the axes of the stars, though the Great Basil doesn't say that. It seems that you would declare, all of them, as opposed to the fathers, as you did to us. But yourself will be exposed as not knowing the truth, related to which we must follow the fathers. And it seems to me that you do not even thing at that truth, and you do not discern that truth from what is unnecessary. That's why, by opposing yourself in those which lead us towards the happy life, and them who aim to achieve the happy life, you claim from them an exact confession in things which do not lead to that happiness⁴¹¹.

That's why, by crossing over his calumnies, in what he has been saying against us, let turn the work to the more necessary aspects.

⁴¹¹ Saint Basil the Great, *Hexaemeron* I: 11; G.P. 29: 25 BC. This attitude of letting to the latitude of the science to find out the truth regarding the nature, it has always been characteristic to the Easter Christendom, which hasn't recorded any case of stopping some scholar to proclaim the result of his research in things which aren't related to the truth of the faith, or to the teachings about salvation.

Of Saint Gregory Palamas

Words for Them Who Appease Themselves Piously.

The Third Word from the Last Ones.

About the Holy Light.

1. He who has described the prayer of the mind like that, against them who dedicated themselves to it, he claims to teach also about the holy light, them who see it. And he does that while himself is blind, a thing that he just doesn't deny. He affirms that they are wrong, they who say that is light what, because of being him blind, he doesn't see it; and he says that is wrong, not only certain persons from the present time, or amongst those who were known for the cleanness of their life and for the height of their godlike sight (contemplation), but he says that even about the venerated saints from old. You are going to see that a little further. Actually, they who heard him speaking such things, and who were hurt, as it is natural to them be, by the size of this new calumny, and because they weren't able to cross silently over such an obvious blasphemy against the holy fathers, and because of even fearing not to be themselves partakers to this hatred against the holy fathers, by keeping their silence regarding it – the reason why we too have been urged to write these – they asked him: "What has happened to you that you have started speaking about the mysterious holy sights, which you won't easily understand even when you hear speaking about those sights, them who experienced them, because of being you uninitiated and blind regarding those sights?". And him, by not being able to deny his nescience and his inexperience, which are obvious to everyone, he answered that there isn't anything of extraordinary, if, while

being blind, one holds the hand of one who sees, and so he will become, as well, a righteous guide to other blind people who, at their turn, they hold his hand. He reckons thus, that through the skillfulness of his word, and through dialectical aphorisms, he can escape the word of the Gospel that says something totally opposite to his affirmations: "If blind guides a blind, they will both fall into pit". "I, though, says this blind, who reckons about himself to be blind and the guide of the blinds, I can follow them who see".

But who amongst blind ones cannot do that? Only him who had both his legs amputated and both his hands amputated, and who is totally weak, only him won't be able to hold your hand and to follow you, and one like that won't even need your help, because of being him confined to the bed. But him who has healthy legs and hands, why, oh, you who love the blind people, why that one would follow you rather than to follow him who can see? So, you seem like one who steals a foggy sight, or, better said, you look like one who doesn't feel his total blindness regarding these things, though you say that you feel it, because you cannot contradict them who see that you are blind. For, if you felt it, how could you claim to be the guide of the other blind ones? Be, therefore, like the blind from the Gospel who, because he wasn't seeing well, due to his lack of faith, he was saying that he was "seeing the people like some walking trees" (Mk. 8: 24). If you see like that too, and you aren't totally blind, of course that, when you look at the solar disk and when you tell other what the solar disk is like, your listeners will find out, from you, that the great illuminator, the eye of the day, that is wholly luminous light, it is – according to you – a dark thing. This is because, by overwhelming the power of the eyes which have clean sight, the solar rays seem to come like mixed with darkness, even to them who have their sight healthy, who could not see except darkness, not even mixed with light, he who attempts to look at the sun with a foggy sight? Thus, it is not only laughable, but it is even worthy of mockery, the attempt of the blind to teach others about light.

2. But let's unveil the precipice of the cogitation of our philosopher; a precipice which, though he has covered it with a parable, he has rather unveiled it than he has hidden it. So, the philosopher says that blind, namely unskilled, are everyone, without exception: both us and the saints, whom he contradicted in an obvious manner; and he differs from blind,

namely from unskilled, only inasmuch as he is a philosopher. In this quality of his, he would be the only one knowing the rationalities of the things and the thinking of the scholars, and so he can follow them and he can guide those who follow him⁴¹².

But who is like that, oh, you the philosopher, he isn't blind; this is for he follows then who guide him towards sight, namely towards the true knowledge as you say; but this means that he sees. And if he followed without seeing, how could him guarantee to others who followed him, the sight? Behold that you are in contradiction with yourself, because of saying here that you are blind and there that you aren't. Actually, if the knowledge is, according to you, the only intelligible light (known with the mind = νοητον φως), and for this affirmation you also have been undertaking these fights, and, on the other hand, if you have the knowledge of the scholars, as yourself confess, how will you be able to still say that you are blind and unilluminated? If, then, someone cannot be illuminated otherwise except you have been illuminated and as you are illuminating, as yourself keep saying it and in many places, then neither the Great Dionysus, whom you reckon that you know how to follow, he wasn't illuminated like this and he doesn't illuminate like this either. This is because, according to you, he didn't know except that: to follow them who know. But neither those ones were able of something else, but they were like you are.

Behold what chain of blind people you offer us by your words; blind people who guide on one another towards sight, while they still remain blind. This was done by other too, arguing that they would follow the Scriptures. But they were exposed by them who truly follow the Scriptures, namely that those were lying to themselves and they were lying regarding the Scriptures too.

3. And if somebody analyzes the way you follow to the saints, he will call you not only as blind, but also as deaf. This is because, behold, Dionysos the Great says, limpidly, as we showed also in our "Word about the Savior Knowledge", that "our likeness and union with God is committed only by keeping

⁴¹² Barlaam denies any other knowledge about God except the rational knowledge about God. If it is so, only him will differ from the blind, in his quality as philosopher.

the commandments”⁴¹³. But you say, equally limpidly, that that isn’t committed only through those, because him who keep these ones is only half cleaned; and even that, with difficulty. Behold what you are stepping on his traces like!⁴¹⁴

And Saint Gregory of Nyssa teaches us, at his turn, that the wisdom from outside is baren and non-consummate and he asks us not to delay rejecting this stepmother, and to accept it only as long as “we see that we are at an unaccomplished age, because of being shameful, after that, to call us as sons of this barren by nature” wisdom⁴¹⁵. But you say that is very beneficial and totally necessary us to remain attach to it for the whole our life and to be proud with it. And you do not even shy to gather other declarations of that one, in order you to be able to convince that the natural knowledge occasions the full savior cleanness. Behold how you are the only one of all who observes exactly what the saints say!

Finally, Basil the Great limpidly says that “there is not impediment against achieving the promises happiness, not knowing the truth about heavens, about earth, and about the elements composing them”⁴¹⁶. But you say that this truth is savior, and if somebody doesn’t shape his mind by knowing the truth which all things can be seen through, he cannot reach consummation. Oh, if only somebody knew this truth, in order us to speak about what is impossible to reach!⁴¹⁷ This is for the knowledge of everything, it is only in God Who says to Job: “Tell me, if you have knowledge, where have the pillars of the earth stuck, which are the springs of the sea, and what large is the width under the sky?) (Job 38: 4, 6, 16, 18). But you think that you are the only ones who knows everything and who possesses the consummation, without having your mind shaped through

⁴¹³ In *The Word I of the Last Ones* (Ed. Hristou, vol. I, p. 465 and the followings); Dionysus the Areopagite, *About the Chruchly Hierarchy* 2; G.P. 3: 392 A.

⁴¹⁴ Barlaam doesn’t pay too much attention to fulfilling the moral commandments in man’s cleanness. He attributed the main role in that - if not unique – to the philosophical speculation.

⁴¹⁵ *About the Life of Moses* 2; G.P. 44: 329 B.

⁴¹⁶ *Word at Psalm 14*; G.P. 29: 256 C.

⁴¹⁷ Saint Gregory Palamas admits the importance of the knowledge of the creatures, in order they to be elevated to the knowledge of God, when through creatures is known God in His quality as creator and upholder or all things cause, namely when one doesn’t remain only to knowing the creatures as opaque and separated things, and without a foundation of theirs into the common and transparent fund of the divine transcendence. This knowledge of the godlike rationalities within world, that is called as natural contemplation, it is reckoned, in the eastern spirituality, as the second step of the spiritual ascension of the man towards God.

this truth, but through those belonging to Aristotle, to Plato, to Euclid, or to Ptolemais, and to other like them. That's why, you reckon as seers of God rather the astrologists and the physiologists, than those who really were so; and this because they would have occupied their rationality, healthily, with the truth about the things, and by gathering that truth, you say that they have reached angelic cogitations. And by saying all of these things, you reckon that you follow, in a sure manner, to Dionysus, of God speaker, and you dare to claim, because of that, to be our undeceiving adviser.

4. But let not praise the crooked that he is straight; this is because, they who see him crooked, he won't be able to convince them that he is straight, and he won't deceive them, even if he deceives on himself. Neither let him lie to them who believe rightly and whom follow, identically, to the speakers about God. This is because of not reaching any result, especially because of being about things which nobody on earth, not even they who receive the grace of the Gospel, couldn't explain those things without mistaking. Who, call it Christina, or Scythe, or Persian, or Hindu, who doesn't know today that God isn't anything from the created or submitted to senses realities? This is for, as at the second coming of the Lord, the grace of the resurrection and of the immortality won't comprise only them who believed in Him but, as the Gospel tells us, everyone will resurrect, though not everyone will rejoice the things promised after resurrection – likewise now, in the time after the first coming, though not everyone have received the Gospel of Christ, everyone are influenced, without knowing it, by the abundance of His grace, so that they confess an uncreated God Who is everyone's Creator. If you asked the Parthian, the Persian, the Sarmat, you would immediately hear that word of Abraham: "I worship a God of the heavens". This wouldn't be said by Ptolemais, neither by Plutarch, not by Marin from Tyr, they who are wise, according to you, and who cultivated their minds with the truth related to the cycles, epicycles, and with the spheres of the sky. Neither will that be told by Aristotle, or by Plato, who declare the stars as bodies of the deities; neither they who say that the horses of the deities jump as much as one can see with the eye, while looking, from a height, at the dark sea.

5. All the people, therefore, today know that through "the light that lighten into darkness" (Jn. 1: 5), better that those who

were yore admired for their wisdom, that God is above senses; and they do not admit, by any means, that God to be characterized and represented in the image of the things. How dare you, then, to throw such a great reproach upon the disciples of the Gospel, them who have heard, with their ear, the words taught by God, and who have been taught through mouths strengthened by the tongues of fire of the Ghost; them who not angel, neither man, but the Lord Himself taught them through His all-extolled mouth? “This if for, The One Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, That One said” (Jn. 1: 18). How dares you tell them who have been chosen from all nations, “the holy nation” (1 Pt. 2: 2), to the Church of God, that they reckon the being of God as sensitive, having image, volume, and quality, and being mixed as the light with the air, which would receive an emanation from it and which would circumscribe, partially and sensitively, this light?⁴¹⁸ Didn’t you think, by judging like so, why someone wouldn’t declare the sun as God, if he had such an opinion about God? Or, why they would insist to run away from feeling other things, if they reckoned God as submitted to senses? Finally, why those whoa re gossiped by you, more than everyone, why they disregard the sensitive pleasures? This is for, to them who are slaved to their stomach, their belly is their sensitive god (Phil. 3: 18); and they who love the money and whoa re greedy, they fund up a new worshipping of idols. And they cannot believe to Christ, according to the evangelical word, they who receive glory from people and who do not search only for the glory from God (Jn. 5: 14). But they who despise all the things, and who do that for God Who is above all things, don’t they show by deeds that they truly worship God Who is beyond all realities? And if they advice other too, to forsake the material things because of them removing the glory from God, isn’t it appropriate to rather listen to them, instead of gossiping them by saying that they do not have a right idea about God?⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁸ Saint Gregory Palamas rejects here the affirmation that the godlike light seen by hesychasts, during the prayer of the mind, it would be reckoned by hesychasts as the being of God, while he rejects, on the other hand, the affirmation that that light could be a sensitive light, or an emanation from the being of Gods, one that can be mixed with the air, and the air could circumscribe it spatially. This would be a real pantheism, or an identification of the creature to God, which Saint Gregory Palamas rejects it assertively.

⁴¹⁹ Saint Gregory Palamas brings a series of practical argument against the accusation presented above. If the hesychast reckoned God as sensitive, namely one with the things, why

6. What you are saying, at the end of this much-speaking against these men, it limpidly exposes your willing calumny against them. “Now, you say, let’s talk about the so-called, by some people, as hypostatized light (περι του ενυ ποστά, λεγονεμον φωτος), without presenting, in advance, our opinion. This is because they say that what they see it is an intelligible light (νοετον φωσ) and immaterial in own hypostasis (εν ιδια υποστάσει). The gossip has been mixed, so, here too. This is for, there is seen a light in hypostasis, it is said by Makarios the Great too⁴²⁰; and the much knowledgeable into the godlike realities Maximos⁴²¹, and others like him, they spoke relatedly. No one speaks about a light in own hypostasis (εν ιδια υποστάσει). Regardless, though he doesn’t say thin either, without mixing in gossip, he confesses that those reckon this light as “intelligible and immaterial”. But that what is intelligible and immaterial, that isn’t submitted to senses; neither in sensitive mode, symbolically. But then, how could he have said, about them, at the beginning, that they declare the being of God as sensitive light, mixed with the air and circumscribed by air, and having image (οχημα), quality, and volume, which are signs characteristic to the sensitive light? Actually, those ones call the light of the grace as intelligible, but neither this in a proper meaning. This is for, they reckon the light of the grace as above-mind, occurring within mind only through the power of the Ghost, while any mind’s works cease⁴²². Neither some of them call that light as being, or as emanation from God, in the sense the philosopher thinks. And if somebody deduced something like that, cunningly, by using

would they avoid to see the things and to attach themselves, through pleasures, to things? This is because, if that was the case, any of the things would be God.

⁴²⁰ *About the Liberty of the Mind* 22; G.P. 34: 956 A, where it is said: “hypostatical light” (υποστατικον φωσ). But by that, Makarios understood the hypostatized light of the godlike persons (Hristou, *quoted work*, p. 544, note no. 1)

⁴²¹ Saint Maximos speaks about the “hypostatical illumination”, in: *Quaest. ad Thalassium* 61, scholium no. 16; G.P. 90: 644 D.

⁴²² By this, Saint Gregory Palamas highlights the fact that that light, though it is called by hesychasts as “intelligible”, they call it like that only in order to show that that light isn’t submitted to the senses (it isn’t sensitive light). Still, that light isn’t known through, or produces by the powers of the mind. This is for, that light occurs within mind exclusively through the power of the grace, when ceases any natural understanding work, or of the mind, it ceases. That light is, therefore, transcendent, totally different from any light that falls under senses, or that is unveiled as an intellectual content of natural cogitation. So, that light isn’t only supra-sensitive, but it is supra-intelligible too.

like an example, this light, of course that wouldn't be a proof that the hesychasts say that, but himself says it. Saying about hesychasts, that they declare that light as above not only to senses, but also to mind, and that the being of God is above that light too, and that they reckon this light as sensitive and seen, isn't that above any gossip?

7. But what says, in continuation, this calumniator of the illuminated and above understanding ones? "If the mental and immaterial light that those ones speak about, they want to be God Himself Who is above being, but they preserve His trait as unseen and untouched through any of the senses, what they say that they see, it must be reckon as being an angel, or itself the being of the mind, which, by being cleaned of passion and of nescience, it sees on itself and into itself, as in a proper way on God. And if they affirm that that light is one of these, they judge very correctly, and we must admit that they are in accord with the Christian tradition. But if they say, though, that there isn't either the being above-being, nor angel, neither the mind itself, but they say that the mind looks at that light as at another hypostasis, in this case I won't know what that light could be, but I know that there isn't such thing"⁴²³.

You think, in your arrogance that despises the people, that there would be such a man to admit some intelligible light (νοητον φως) in won hypostasis (self-subsistent = εν ιδία υποστάσει), which not being either God or angel, nor human mind? neither with the help of the imagination, someone couldn't imagine an intelligible light (known with the mind), in own hypostasis (self-subsistent), except the Three Ones⁴²⁴. But, lets admit that this thing would be impossible. Let's admit that someone amongst hesychasts said that to your wisdom. I do not

⁴²³ Barlaam didn't admit except the being of God, that isn't accessible except to a deductive speculation, or only the creatures. He didn't admit the energies or the works of God as means of God's entering in a real connection with us. Consequently, according to Barlaam, the light which the hesychasts affirmed that they saw it, if it was not the being of God, it could not be but the being of an angel, or the itself mind's being. In the last case, one would admit that God is seen in it as in His own image, namely analogically.

⁴²⁴ A misunderstanding of Barlaam came from the fact that he reckoned the light that he said the hesychasts saw it, as it would be self-subsistent, or it would exist in an own hypostasis. But light, in a proper meaning, it is only the godlike being, the angel, or the human mind, said Barlaam. Saint Gregory Palamas agreed him. But he mentioned that, no one amongst hesychasts affirmed that the light they saw it would exist in an own hypostasis, or it would have self-subsistence. That light has its subsistence in God, namely it exists in the "hypostasis" (godlike) or, better said, in the Three godlike Hypostases.

know who could be that one. You only tell us that he is amongst the untaught ones. And that, that one couldn't explain you well, and I rather believe that, or he told you what himself cannot understand well – this can be too, because not all of them possess the knowledge. Didn't you ought, to inform yourself from them who have the gifts of the discernment, in order you to find out from them, as much as possible, what is with this seeing of that light, instead you gossiping them who are full with God, as they would have been some insane people, and you to suffer what Paul says towards Corinthians: "If somebody who is untaught of unbeliever, enters at you, and he doesn't hear them who can interpret, he will say that you are crazy" (1 Cor. 14: 23). But that has happened to you too, you monk and philosopher, like it happens to the untaught and to the unbeliever.

And if not only one, not a few of them, but even all of told you said so, that wouldn't justify you what you said about your many calumnious affirmations, namely: "I know this light doesn't exist". This is because everybody would agree your saying that a light that is self-subsistent (in own hypostasis), that is neither God, nor angel or man, it doesn't exist. And, in the same time, everyone would realize that, if somebody claims he sees an intelligible self-subsistent light (in own hypostasis), that one affirms that he would see something of The Tree Ones; and, by affirming that, he cogitates very correctly, as yourself admitted it. And then, whom are your mockery and calumnies - from your many books - directed at? Aren't they aiming to them whom you say about, very correctly, that they judge very rightly, while you still don't admit your calumny?

8. I am not saying that those ones cogitate at that light similarly as you do, or that they theologize as you do. This is for they cogitate and theologize superiorly to you, and they are so above to your calumnies and reproaches.

You say about them: "If they call that intelligible light as God, but they still preserve the God's attribute as unseen and as untouchable by any of the senses, they say well". But they reckon the being of God even above the impossibility of being touched by any of the senses; this is for not only God is above the existing realities (the created realities), but also Supra-God (*υπερθεος*); and the height of Him Who is beyond and Who

exceeds any limit which can cogitated with the mind⁴²⁵ it isn't only above any affirmation, but it is also above any negation. The persistent light seen by the saints, in a spiritual manner, it is subsistent into hypostasis (φως ενυποστώτως), as themselves confess it, as one that exists and that isn't only something symbolical, as there would be the fantoms imagined according to the random circumstances. They know by experience, that there are an immaterial and a godlike illumination and grace, a light that is seen in an unseen manner, and that is understood in an unknown manner⁴²⁶. But what is that, they do not know to tell you.

9. You find out, with the methods of the definition, of the analysis, and of the division, and you deign to teach us too, us who do not know⁴²⁷. The being of God is not (that light); this is because the being is inaccessible and unimpartable. Angel it is not, for it bears mastery traits⁴²⁸. Sometimes it elevates you out of your body, or it doesn't take you without your body, in order to elevate you on untold peaks; some other time it transforms the body too, by adapting the body to itself that light, and it communicates to the body too its own shininess, as once was seen Great Arsenius during appeasement⁴²⁹, or Stephan when he was stoned to death (Acts 6: 15), or Moses when he

⁴²⁵ We are here in full apophatic theology in the sense given to it by Dionysus the Areopagite. (*About the Mystical Theology* 1: 1 and 5; G.P. 3: 997 A and 1048 B). The being of God is reckoned by Saint Gregory Palamas, and by hesychasts, by its transcendence, at the extreme opposite to its identification to the creation, identification which they were accused of. The being of God not only that is invisible and inaccessible to the senses, but it is even above that invisibility and inaccessibility. The being of God is a top beyond any of the sensitive or thoughts tops. The being of God is beyond not only anything one could say affirmatively, but it is also beyond anything that one could say negatively about it. The being of God is above the meaning of the words: being, existence, kindness, and also above the words which are opposite to these. God isn't either existence or inexistence; God is above word, but we neither can renounce to speaking about Him. The fact that God is beyond any affirmation or negation, it doesn't make impossible a connection of His with us. He communicates, on Himself, to us, in a light which we can perceive but we cannot explain it.

⁴²⁶ "Illumination seen in an unseen manner and understood in a non-understood manner". Only the contradictory (dialectical) speaking can express this experience.

⁴²⁷ These are the methods of the scholastic theology, which do not have entrance to God Who is above affirmations and negations.

⁴²⁸ From the light seen in an unsee manner, there irradiates an absolute authority. And it even has in itself something that makes Christ felt (by him who sees the light, E. l. t.'s n.), our Lord and Master. That light is experienced as the light of the Person of God, or of Christ. It is like the human person is felt in the light or in the evidence endowed with will, that irradiates out of the human person.

⁴²⁹ *Paterikon*, Arsenius: 42; G.P. 65: 108 A.

descended from the mountain (Exod. 34: 35). Therefore, by deifying the body too, it is seen – oh, wonder! – by the bodily eyes too. Some other times, again, it speaks him who sees it and it utters untold words, as it spoke to godlike Paul (2 Cor. 12: 4)⁴³⁰ “This is for, he Who is according to His being from age to age, unseen to everyone and non-comprised to all, He descends from his height in order to match, to some extent, within our nature”, as says Gregory the Speaker about God⁴³¹. Then, he who has been found worthy of that light, by gathering himself within himself, he always turns in his mind the same name which the Jews gave it to the bread descended from above, calling it as *manna* (Exod. 16: 14 and the followings): What is this? This is the name they give to that light. If you can say more, say it! But let’s turn to the followings.

10. You say that those ones would cogitate rightly also in the case they reckoned that light as an angel. But those would never call that light as angel. This is because they know, by being taught by the words of the fathers, that the seeing of the angels takes place differently and according to them who see the angels. The seeing of the angels can take place either in the thickness of the substance (ἐν παχύτητι οὐσίας), that one that falls under senses too, and it is not totally unseen either by them who are passionate or inexperienced; or it can take place in the thinness of the substance which can be seen, to some extent, by the soul too; or it takes place in true sight (contemplation), which are found worthy of, only them who see spiritually through cleanness. But you, because of not being introduced in discerning these kinds, you say that even the angels cannot see one another, and you reckon them as unseen not due to their incorporeality, but because of their being; and amongst rows, you place the seers of God (θεόπτας) in the same row with the female donkey of Barlaam, for it was written about that donkey that it saw an angel too (Num. 22: 25).

11. Again, you will declare the mind as God seer, if the mind doesn’t look as at another hypostasis, but at itself, and in itself, as in an own image: at God. – when the mind has been cleaned out of passions and of nescience. And you reckon that

⁴³⁰ Saint Simeon the New Theologian often presents in his “Hymns of the Godlike Love”, that light that he sees it as talking to him (c. g. Hymns 18, editor J. Koder, *Hymnes*, tome III, p. 285). Saint Gregory Palamas is influenced by Saint Simeon. In that light that speaks, there is Christ Himself.

⁴³¹ *Word* no. 45: 11; G.P. 36: 637 B.

they are in according to the Christian tradition, them who say that they see, thus, as light, the itself being of the mind. But those know that the mind that is cleaned and illuminated and it has become obviously partaker to the grace of God, it is found worthy of other mysterious and above-nature sights⁴³², as we have shown before. And if the mind sees itself too, it will be right to say that the mind see itself as something else, but it doesn't look at something else and it doesn't see only its own image, but it sees the shininess of God imprinted by grace in the own image (εμμορφωθείσαν), a shininess that completes the power of the mind to surpass on itself, and it consummates the union with the highest and above union realities. This is for, through it, the mind sees God into the Ghost, even better that it can see Him as man⁴³³. And the fact that you know these things, it isn't unusual, since those too, they won't wonder less, if you know the things happening to them, you who do not admit anything above knowledge.

According to that, you say that the mind becomes seer of God when it has been cleaned up not only of passions, but also of nescience. But those ones, they do not say a word about the "cleaning of nescience", which you deem it as necessary. But, by cleaning themselves of the evil passions and by exceeding any knowledge through perseverant and immaterial prayer, they will be found worthy of seeing God, as ones who do not let themselves being deceived by such reasonings, and who do not stop talking heed at themselves, as ones who do not run for gathering, zealously, reasonings and teachings and to find out what each one teaches, be it Scythian, or Persian, or Egyptian,

⁴³² Barlaam admitted only the possibility the mind "sees" itself, namely of knowing on itself, and, by analogy, to know God. Saint Gregory Palamas, according to the entire eastern tradition, he reckons that through mind, a mind that has become transparent through cleanness, the man sees, in a real manner, the uncreated energy that irradiates out of God. Better said, the mind has the emotional proof, namely the „understanding" feeling of the work. Or of the working presence of God.

⁴³³ While Barlaam locked up the mind in its own sight, Palamas saw in mind the shininess of God Who has take image within mind; the mind saw itself too, or itself the mind saw itself, but also through the Ghost, and not through the mind's simple natural sight; he saw in it also the shininess of God completing the mind and consummating the mind's union with God. It saw itself in the happiest communion. One could say that the mind that has reached the capability of fully seeing on itself and of being happy in this sight, it doesn't see itself as separated from God Who is the mod completer communion partner. Actually, like the man knows himself much better when sees himself in communion with another person, likewise, but endlessly happier and fuller he sees himself in communion with God.

on the purpose of this cleaning up of nescience. This is because they know, with certitude, that this nescience does not impede the seeing of God⁴³⁴. If, as you say, only the keeping of the commandments produces the cleaning of passions, and only that makes us, according to the promise of God, worthy of the presence, of the dwelling, and of His showing within us, won't be an obvious mistake the adding you are speaking about, namely this cleaning that you call it as cleaning of nescience? But, as we showed extensively, in the "Words" from before, the cleaning of this nescience means abolishing the true knowledge⁴³⁵.

12. But now we have to turn ourselves back to what the philosopher says, in continuation, against them ho appease themselves (against hesychasts). Actually, by exposing him that he slanders them, it was limpidly shown, also, the fact that he wages war against himself, by tipping over the contrivances of his own cogitation, and so he rather combats on himself than those ones. Still, because he reckons that he writes against our people, let's see what has he written? "The cause, he says, which started from, they who are accused, it is the fact that they reckon the being of God, or the emanation out of God's being, as a sensitive light. And this opinion comes to them from the fact that they reckon that most of the sights and of the unveiling which the saints had, in a mysterious way, as mentioned in the Scripture, those sight and unveiling took place into light and through light; and the proof that they understand so, the being of God, it is the fact that they reckon as seeing virtue (contemplative) and as seer man (contemplative =

⁴³⁴ Here, Saint Gregory Palamas means, through knowledge, a theoretical, deductive, or from distance, knowledge about God.

⁴³⁵ Consequent to the opinion that the knowledge through ideas it is the sole mode to "see" God, Barlaam gave the highest importance to the cleaning up of the philosophical nescience. Unlike him, the spiritual people reckon as means which they reach through at seeing God, meaning living in His presence and power, the cleaning of the evil passions and the prayer. Through these, they surpass any knowledge that only deductively knows about God, from distance. Barlaam reckons that the nescience consists of ignoring the philosophical, deductive knowledge of God, and he was asking for the cleaning up of philosophical nescience. Palamas, on the opposite, he reckons that losing this nescience means losing the true knowledge about God. This is the central point which Barlaam and Palamas clashed on, namely the recently then constituted scholasticism, with the eastern spiritual tradition, preserved here from the apostolical times, a tradition which, without refusing a knowledge about God through nature, it affirms that there is, above knowing God out of nature, also a knowledge about God through direct experience, and with that knowledge are imparted them who have their heart cleanness up of passions.

θεωρητικον ανδρα) on him who is found worthy of such lights and he lives in communication with these lights.

But how – oh, you the wonderful one! – he who reckons the seer (the contemplative) as such, he still reckons that the being of God is such a luminous light? This is because no one amongst our people has defined the seer (the contemplative) as the ones who sees the being of God. If, therefore, the seer doesn't see the being of God and, on the other hand, those ones call, according to you, as seer, him who sees some kind of light, it will be obvious that those ones do not believe that that light, which the seer affirms that he sees it, it would be the being of God. Behold how easy one can reject the evilness, which tips over itself, not sparing even on itself, but always turning against itself, by the fact that it always is in contradiction with itself.

So proved, unwillingly, also the oldened in evilness old men, the innocence of Susanna. Though they were three in number, by being each one taken separately by the God guided wisdom of the boy Daniel, it is no wonder that they were in disaccord with one another. But how much the philosopher surpassed those old men because, while being only one, he cannot agree even with himself, despite he has placed in an order, through cogitation and writing, his calumnies.

13. And not only that. But the sign he gave at the beginning, against hesychasts, in order to prove them the most strayed amongst people, being shown, in the same time, as a proof of their right faith, he gave that sign against himself. And being done that, he let flowing, amongst his words, the gall of his pain from his soul. And what caused him his strong pain and unchained his fury against these men, it seems that it was the fact that they didn't deign to call him a seer too, neither on other from amongst them who occupy themselves with the teachings of the Hellenes, while they do not occupy themselves, at all, with the prayer, with the singing, with restraining from passions, and with the working of the virtues.

Infuriated, therefore, thus, and because of this reason, he hides his passion in the deep folds of his heart and he approaches the simple people, deceiving them, as yore the snake did to Eva. By doing so, he learns form some of them, firstly, some of the teachings of the fathers, and then he crooks those teachings with ill will. But because those ones do not listen to him, but they rather follow Him Who has made Himself, for us, the new Adam, he starts, in the first place

against them, and through them against all of them who embrace the quietude. And he doesn't even let non-condemned either those from before us, not even them declared as saints, by the Church; and he is even more intended against those ones, because they left in writing the sayings which bring the most decisive proof against his ideas. And in order his calumnies to be believed too, against them whom he spent his time pretending to learn from them, and by that against them too, he has shown in writing the teaching he learnt from those ones, before, as he said, to be in details analyzed by him, in order him to prove them as untrue. He gave his writings to us too.

But, in these writings we have found no interpretation or memory of the prophetic unveilings. And about the being of God, there has been not word too. But not the much-taught one gets close to God, but he who has cleaned up himself of passions, and who has attached himself, through perseverant and clean prayer, to God, and who reached through them to the full entrustment and to tasting the future goods, entrusting and tasting which, by honoring it with more godlike names, as much as possible, they called it as mysterious earnest⁴³⁶. But this one hasn't been satisfied only with the cunningness he has contrived against those ones, namely that they affirm that not the sciences but the godlike Scripture it is totally useless and that they reckon as bad the knowledge about things, and they reckon the passions as devils united, in substance, with the soul, and so many other things like those⁴³⁷. So, he added also

⁴³⁶ Palamas specified that the cleaning up of the real nescience about God, it is usually that achieved by working the virtues. On the opposite, the speculative knowledge which one can reach through philosophy, it is not the most appropriate knowledge about God, because of causing within us: the pride, the lack of humbleness - and those won't let us truly seeing our reality and the reality of God. They who clean themselves, they have a sight of God that is an earnest of the full sight in the future life. In this sight, there is a certitude of the presence of God (πληροφορία). The hesychasts lived in the certitude of the presence of God, and not in a speculation about God. In the writings received by Barlaam from hesychasts, it was told only about this entrustment (certitude) and about the fact that one can reach that certitude by cleaning himself of passion and by lengthy praying, and it wasn't about seeing the being of God, as Barlaam accused them. It seems to be about the writings of Gregory Sinaite.

⁴³⁷ These things were affirmed by the Bogomils who were at that time called as Messalians, a name that is used also to call a similar current from the Centuries IV-V. Amongst the hesychasts monks there were hiding also some monks who interpreted the ascetic texts as the Messalians and the Bogomil did; it was about the newer texts composed in the spirit of Makarios the Great, and, by and large, it was about the ascetic writings which recommended to fight the demons and which affirmed that, at the end of the cleaning of passions, there will

the affirmations regarding the being of God. But starting to contrive this calumny too, against those men, he thought to present as worthy of being believed, this appalling contrivance of his calumny. And then he used the unveiling, through light, of the prophets and the claimed contradictions within them, contradictions which have never been affirmed until now, by anybody, except by this enemy of the unveiling of the prophets. Doubtlessly, we are not interested in the fact that, in these affirmations, he actually wages a war to himself. Let him hit and cut himself.

14. But after this battle through calumnies, he starts another one, striving to show that only the knowledge about creatures can be the light that one can see it with the mind⁴³⁸. From here it would come that everyone who didn't occupy themselves with Aristotle's teaching about nature, with Plato's theology, and with Ptolemais's astrology, they would be darken and unclean. That's why he rushed over, with reproaches and with ugly names, upon them who do not preach only the illumination through ideas. And he literally says: "But they with the inhalings of the air (εισπνοάς) they say that there are two the lights shown by God to the mind of the pious ones: one is that of the knowledge, and another is subsistent in hypostasis (ενυπόστατον), which is shown especially them who reach further in inhalings"⁴³⁹.

Let's see who are they whom he mocks with such names, as they would be some strayed ones. For, by describing them, one will be able to see that there is, in addition to knowledge, also a light that is much higher and much godlike than that one, a light that is unveiled only them who see through the Ghost; namely, not only them who are living today, but also to all the

be a "sight" of the godlike light; they interpreted those affirmations in the sense that that light is the being of God and the demons are united, in substance with the soul. And some of them, by continuously repeating the Lord's Prayer (Our Father), they even reckoned as useless the reading of the Holy Scriptures (Jean Meyendorff, *quoted work*, pp. 23-24). Barlaam, knowing about this interpretation given by Bogomils, he attributed it, knowingly or unknowingly, to the hesychasts. But he was pushed to do that, but his scholastic conception that was opposed to any "seeing" or "feeling" of God.

⁴³⁸ This is the scholastic teaching that Barlaam opposed it to the spiritual tradition of the Christendom from the beginning: there is not godlike light coming within soul; the sole light the mind is partaker to, it is the deductive knowledge about God, through creatures.

⁴³⁹ The hesychasts didn't deny that there is also a light of the natural knowledge of the creatures. But, on the basis of the entire eastern tradition, they recognized also a light coming into the mind, in an unmediated manner, from God.

saints from all times. And the fact that the philosopher blames not only certain people amongst us, but he blames all of them, together, who embrace the sanctified life of the appeasement, this fact shows him to us, limpidly, as that one who, after he crooked and slandered, sophistically, the written teaching that comes to us from the fathers and it is praised by them who advanced into virtue and by the godlike men elevated before, from amongst us (teaching that has been proving, by experience, its benefit for the beginners), he goes even further and gives to all of us a name deduced out of it, and that word is used for slandering all of us, by and large⁴⁴⁰.

15. But, because it happened also to many amongst the saints we venerate, who lived yore, to find out and to teach other about experiencing the grace's light, we too will present here, in accord to the evangelical commandments, as witness, those words belonging to the fathers, which comprise the testimony of those who were not quoted, as the Scripture shows us. By using the same mode here too, we are going to give those words of the fathers which are affirmed like written, similarly, by all the other fathers.

Therefore, Issac the faithful and trustworthy interpreter of these things, he says: "We have achieved two souly eyes, as our fathers say". Have your heard that all the fathers say that? "Two souly eyes the fathers say that we have. But we do not use their sight in the same way; with one we see the realities hidden into natures, namely the power and the wisdom of God and His Providence regarding us, understood out of the greatness of His governance; with the other eye we look at the glory of His holy nature, when God deigns to introduce us in the spiritual mysteries"⁴⁴¹. For they are eyes, consequently, they see what it is luminous light; and due to the fact that we do not use their sight alike, there is a twofold seeing of the light: through one eye we see another light that that seen by us with the other eye. And what is each of these two lights, it showed us the godlike Issac himself. He called one of the two as the understanding of the power, of the wisdom, and of the Providence of God, shortly speaking: knowing the Creator, achieved out of creatures; the

⁴⁴⁰ Barlaam, by interpreting in a manner characteristic to Bogomils or Messalians, the eastern spiritual tradition, he called all the monks who were practicing this tradition, as Messalians, and so he slandered all of them. This is because the first three treatises against them he entitled them, in the second wording: "Against Messalians".

⁴⁴¹ *Word no. 72*, ed. Teotochi, p. 281.

second one he called it the sight not of the godlike nature, and so the gossipers have nothing to argue with, but the sight of the glory of the nature of God, given by God to his disciples, and through His disciples to all of them who believe in Him and who prove their faith by deeds. These ones wanted to see this light too: “I want, Christ says to the Father, these ones to see My glory, which You gave it to Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world” (Jn. 17: 24); or: “Extol Me, Father, at You, with the glory that I had at You before the world existed” (Jn. 17: 5). So, He gave to the human nature too, the glory of the godhead, but not the nature of the godhead. Something else is, therefore, the nature of God, and something else is His glory, though they are unseparated from one another⁴⁴².

But, despite the glory is something else than the godlike nature, the glory cannot be counted amongst those which are under time. This is for, the glory isn’t something, but it is in the sense of exceeding anything that exists (οὐκ οὐσα καθ’ υπεροχὴν). On the other hand, itself the godlike nature exists, but in an untold way⁴⁴³. And he didn’t give only to the dust united with Him, according to hypostasis, this glory that is above all existing realities (above creatures), but also to His disciples: “The glory You gave it to Me, Father, I have given it to them; in order they to be one as We are one; I into them, and You into Me, for they to be, consummately, one” (Jn. 17: 22)⁴⁴⁴. And He even wanted those even to see it. This is the glory that we actually receive and see God through.

⁴⁴² Saint Gregory Palamas reached here to a clearer expression of the difference between the godlike nature and the godlike glory, or its light, which he saw it also in his “The Third Word of the First Words” (see at: Fr. D. Stăniloae, *The Life and the Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas*, p. 34). By this, he rejected both the Messalians’ heresy, that affirmed a sight of the godlike nature, and the scholastic rationalism of Barlaam, who didn’t recognize to God any possibility of entering the unmediated connection with the human being.

⁴⁴³ Even the godlike glory cannot receive the attribute of “existing” (οὐσα), because, at Saint Maximos, this attribute was granted to creatures. God is called as “He Who is in existent mode” (ὁ ὄντως ὢν). One can, therefore, say that the glory “doesn’t exist”, in the sense that it exceeds the “existence” (οὐχ οὐσα, καθ’ υπεροχὴν).

⁴⁴⁴ The believers, by receiving the glory of the Father and of the Son, they become one amongst themselves and with the godlike Persons, as These Ones are one Themselves. So, through that glory, the believers give themselves, as a gift, in common, to the Father Himself and to the Son Himself as to Persons. There is not, therefore, about an “emanation” (ἐπιρροή) thinned from a denser substance, in the Neoplatonic sense, as it is accused, by the newer Thomist theology, the teaching expressed by Saint Gregory Palamas. The glory, or the light, it is the mode a godlike Persons enters the connection with the human person who open themselves by faith, as something analogue takes place amongst the human persons.

16. How we receive and see, therefore, this glory of the godlike nature? By researching the rationalities of the things and by obtaining, through them, the knowledge of the power, of the wisdom, and of the Providence of God? But other eye of the soul sees these, an eye which the godlike light is not shown to, or “the glory of His nature”, according to the saying, from above, of Saint Isaac, and of all the other fathers. So, this is another light that is called as knowledge. But then, they who have the knowledge of the things, or who see through the knowledge of the things, not anyone of them have God dwelling within them. They have only the knowledge of the creatures, and out of it they deduce about God, by likeness. But he who has that light and who sees that light in an untold manner, he won’t deduce God by likeness (οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ εἰκότος), but he knows and he has God within himself, through a sight that is true and that is above all creatures. This is for, That One doesn’t ever part with His eternal glory⁴⁴⁵.

But let’s not lose our reins, by becoming disobedient because of the overwhelming abundance of the benefaction. But, by believing Him Who has taken our nature and Who gave us, as a gift, the glory of His nature, let’s research what this glory one can achieve it like, and what one can see it lie? What like? by keeping the commandments. This is for, him who keep the commandments, the Lord promised him His showing, one called by Him also a His and Father’s dwelling. For He says: “If somebody loved Me, he will keep My word and My Father will love him and We will come to him and We will make abode within him and I will show Myself him” (Jn. 14: 23).

It is clear that through His word He means His commandments; only a little earlier, instead of word He said commandments: “He who has My commandments and keeps them, that one is who loves Me” (Jn. 14: 21).

17. So, here too it is shown, just by the words and dogmas of our philosopher, that this sight of God isn’t, at all, knowledge, despite the philosopher would joyfully want

⁴⁴⁵ This interpersonal connection was not understood by the scholastic theology. By reckoning that God can be only deductively thought, the scholastic theology transformed God in a substance-object, one transcendent and unfree, without initiative. It was a mentality that replaced the communion with God for a philosophy, for a thinking about God.

anything else rather than this⁴⁴⁶. We must specify here, thought, that we say that his sight isn't knowledge in sense of exceeding, as we say about God too that He is not, in the sense of exceeding the things which exist (μη οντα, και γαρ υπερ τα οντα)⁴⁴⁷. Besides, just by the words of the philosopher, it is unwillingly shown the fact that this godlike light is something else than the knowledge is. He says that "the keeping of the commandments cannot banish away, from within soul, the darkness of the nescience; this can be done only by the perseverant learning and study. And what doesn't banish away the nescience, it won't ever be able to provide the knowledge". But just that, according to him, it doesn't provide the knowledge, it provides – according to the words of the Lord, this sight. And not only that we ought not to reckon and call this one as knowledge, but not even known, except, maybe, by abuse, by having only its name in common. Or, we ought to call this one knowledge more than we call the other one as knowledge, in a proper sense, but through exceeding. Therefore, not only one must not reckon this as knowledge, but we even must reckon it above any knowledge and above any sight through knowledge⁴⁴⁸. This is because nothing is above the dwelling and showing of God within us, not equal, not close to that, and on the other hand, we know that the fulfilling of the commandments of God provide knowledge too, and even true knowledge⁴⁴⁹. This is because only through this knowledge alone, there comes the health of the soul. But how could be healthy a rational soul whose power of knowledge would be

⁴⁴⁶ The "sight" of God reached by him who keeps His commandments as the commandments of a Person, it is something else than the theoretical knowledge about God, even if Barlaam didn't admit it by any cost.

⁴⁴⁷ But this "sight" isn't knowledge not because it would be below knowledge, or because it would simply be a lack of knowledge, but for it exceeds the knowledge (υπερ την γνωσιν). This is for, the knowledge refers to existing things, namely the creatures. But God is above existing things, or above creatures.

⁴⁴⁸ The fact that isn't knowledge, but in the sense of exceeding, it doesn't mean that cannot be reckoned as knowledge, but it must be reckoned knowledge.

⁴⁴⁹ Saint Gregory Palamas, as all the eastern fathers, he isn't against knowing God out of nature, but he knows about another knowledge about God, a higher knowledge, by sight, one that includes the first king of nature. The "sight" of God isn't the knowledge of God through creatures, or through the existing realities, and this is because they who see God in an unmediated manner, they see Him Who doesn't even exist, and that is because He exceeds all the existing realities, namely the creatures.

sick?⁴⁵⁰ So, the commandments of God provide knowledge too. And not only knowledge, but deification too⁴⁵¹. And we achieve this⁴⁵², by receiving and by seeing the glory of God within us, into Ghost, when God deigns to introduce us into His mysteries, as the mentioned saint says.

18. For that one said that all the fathers from before him said it, we are going too to except the fathers from after him, and so we are going to present only a few fathers from before him, in order us to see what they say that the glory of God is, a glory that is seen only by the experienced ones, in a mysterious and untold manner. Before all, let's see the eyewitnesses and the apostles of the Only One our Father: Jesus Christ Who any father is named fatherhood (πατρία), in the fullness of the Holy Church (Eph. 3: 15)⁴⁵³. And before apostles, their coryphée, Peter, who says: "Not by following to the crafted stories, I have made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have been made seer of His glory" (2 pt. 1: 16). What glory of the Lord Peter saw it, let another apostle tell us, by saying: "When Peter and they who were with him awakened, they saw the glory of Christ" (Lk. 9: 32). And what was that glory like, let again another evangelist to confess it:

⁴⁵⁰ The "sight" of God is endlessly richer than the knowledge is, or it satisfies endlessly more, all the needs of the soul of entering the connection with the reality of God, for the powers of the soul are healed by fulfilling the commandments of God. The fulfilling of the commandments of God is the condition for entering the personal relation with God, and this relation fulfills all the needs of the soul for a consummate communion. In this sense, they contribute to soul's healing. By fulfilling the commandments, our soul accepted the positive dialogue with God, by answering the God's appeal to love. And thus, it is accomplished the health-giver and life-giver dialogue, one giver of meaning, of rationality for the life of the soul. By opening himself to God, by fulfilling God's commandments, the soul not only that hears and sees God, as speaking to the soul from outside, but God dwells within that soul too. A God Who gives commandments, He is a Person-God Who takes the believer, seriously, as person.

⁴⁵¹ Just because fulfilling the commandments means progress in communion, as persons, between believer and God, this fulfilling doesn't only bring a knowledge that is superior to the theoretical knowledge, but it brings also the deification of the believer.

⁴⁵² For this deification takes place in the same time with the dwelling of God within believer, it is reflected as the glory of God out of believer. With it, God unveils His mysteries to the believer. This is for the glory isn't empty of content, but it is the richness of God's loving reality.

⁴⁵³ The father is the one whom our life comes from, and whom our inheritance comes from. In this meaning, the successive fathers who we have within Church, they have received this quality as fathers, from the First Father: Jesus Christ Who we have all the teaching and life from.

“And it shined, he says, His face as the sun, and His clothes became white as the light (Mt. 17: 2).

By that He showed them that He is God, “He Who puts on the light as a coat” (Ps. 103: 2⁴⁵⁴), as the psalm says. That’s why Peter too, after he said that he saw “in the holy mountain” the glory of Christ, that light that, thought is sounds strange to the West, it illuminated the hearing too – for he saw there a luminous tent too, which words could be heard out of⁴⁵⁵ - after he saw, therefore, this glory of Christ, he says: “And we have more strengthened the prophetic word” (2 Pt. 1: 19). What prophetic word do you have more strengthened, by being you taught by the seeing of the light, of, you seers of God? What else that that saying that God “puts up the light as a coat”. “To this prophetic word, you do good that you take heed at it, as at a light that shines into dark place, until the daylight will come” (2 Pt. 1: 19). What day? Of course, that day that illuminated on Tabor. “And until the Morningstar will rise” (2 Pt. 1: 19). What Morningstar? Without any doubt, That One Who lightened him there, where he was together with James and with John. Until this Morningstar will shine, where? “Without your hearts” (2 Pt. 1: 19). Can you see that this light is being shown, now, within the hearts of the believers and of the consummate ones? And can you see how much it exceeds the light of the knowledge? And not only that knowledge from the Hellene teachings, because that one isn’t even worthy to be called as light, because of being liar and mixed with lie and close rather to darkness than to light; not only on that one, therefore, but also that one from the godlike Scriptures⁴⁵⁶. This light is so different form the

⁴⁵⁴ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 1-2: “BLESS the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty // Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:”; in Rob we have: Ps. 103: 1-3: “Bless, my soul, the Lord! Lord, my God You have extolled Yourself very. // Into shininess and into great adornment You have dressed Yourself up; You Who put on the light as a coat; ‘ You Who stretch the sky as a tent;” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁴⁵⁵ By stressing the fact that the seen godlike light it speaks too, Saint Gregory Palamas is influenced by Saint Simeon the New Theologian; on the other hand, he highlights the character of that light as person, or that light’s feature of manifesting the Person of Christ. In that light is speaking Christ Himself.

⁴⁵⁶ Even the knowledge out of Scriptures, because of only speaking about Christ, and it doesn’t show Him to us, it is lower than the “seeing” Christ’s Person in reality, namely it is lower that living Christ’s presence within us. Maybe this affirmation made Barlaam saying that the hesychasts despise the Scripture, by reckoning the Scripture inferior to subjectively living on Christ. But Christ lived by hesychasts, He was, firstly, known and checked through Scriptures. The Scripture and the living on Christ must go together. Neither it produces life

light of the knowledge, so that the light of the knowledge likens to a candlestick that lightens in a dark place, while this mysterious light likens to the lightener that lightens during the day, namely it likens to the sun.

19. "But how could he compare, he says, to the sun seen with the senses, if it was godlike?" You, the most speculative of all, don't you know that and can't you understand that it is said to like in an example, not comparatively, that God lightens like the sun does, or above the sun⁴⁵⁷. Even if there shined, during the day, a second illuminator of the same kind with the sun, and so the daily would become twofold, each of the two suns, because of shining into so much light, they would become even shinier. So, that one which would shine then, even if it shined like the sun, because of overwhelming the sunlight, it would no longer shine like the sun, but more than the sun. Thus, even if we spoke about Him, by using the comparison of the resemblance, there wouldn't be equality. But because we only compare Him through example, it will be obvious that He won't have any resemblance of same honor. But we have proven, as much as we could, in our "Word about the Godlike Illumination and about the Holy Happiness", that that light shown on Tabor to the chosen ones amongst Lord's disciples, it isn't either sensitive or intelligible in a proper sense.

20. They who fight against this light and against this enlightenment, they also say that all the lights shown by God to the saints, all those lights are symbolic contrivances and riddles for some immaterial and intelligible things, shown out of oikonomia and through contrivance, according to the circumstances of each moment. In order they to prove that, they say lies about Dionysus the Areopagite, by presenting him as in accordance with them, though Dionysus limpidly declares that the light that surrounded the disciples at the godlike Transfiguration, it will lighten us, endlessly and ceaselessly, in the future age, with all-shiny rays, as ones who will be then, according to the promise, always with the Lord⁴⁵⁸. What this -

the reading of the Scripture without living on Christ, nor it is possible living on Christ without knowing Him out of Scripture.

⁴⁵⁷ Something else is the comparison and something else is the example. The comparison represents the same thing on two stages, one more potentiated or less potentiated than another; or it presents some resemblances and differences between two things which are on the same plan. The example is a sensitive image of a unsensitive reality.

⁴⁵⁸ *About the Godlike Names* I: 4; G.P. 3: 592 BC.

all-shiny and godlike, always and truly existent and unchangeable – light won't cease like? Since it is a known fact that all the symbols and riddles, contrived according to specific circumstances, they occur and disappear, and now they are and after they no longer exist, or, better said, they appear on occasions but they almost never exist in a proper sense, what it won't - that all-shiny and all-godlike light - cease like, to eternally exist both in proper sense and in changed sense? Will be able to declare the sun – the sun it actually is the shiniest in the world of the sensitive things, but the sun started existing through changing and it is submitted to several changes during each year, and it is impeded, by many bodies, to penetrate them, and that now is eclipsed, now hides, and on occasion even obeys the commandments of the saints and so the sun is forced to interrupt its movement and then to start it again – will we declare this sun and its light, as existent and subsistent, and that light “which there isn't any change or any shadow of movement at” (Jas. 1: 17), as the shininess of the body that is partaker to God, of that body that is rich in the glory of the godhead and conveyer of the godhead, that light that is the beauty of the future and non-passing age, will we declare that light as symbol and non-subsistent contrivance? We won't do that, as long as we will love that light.

21. This light was limpidly called by Gregory the Speaker about God, and by John Chrysostom, and by Basil the Great, as godhead. “That light, I am saying, it is the godhead that showed itself, on the mountain, to the disciples”⁴⁵⁹. Or: “The Lord showed Himself shinier than Himself, when the godhead showed its rays”⁴⁶⁰. Or: “This power will be shown, shining to them who are clean in their hearts, through the worshipped body, as through a glass lamp”⁴⁶¹. So, this glory wasn't only of the body, but it was of the godlike nature, that united in One of its holy Hypostases, with that worshipper body, it poured into him the whole its godlike glory and shininess⁴⁶². That's why

⁴⁵⁹ Saint Gregory the Theologian, *Word 40*: 6; G.P. 36: 365 A.

⁴⁶⁰ Saint John Chrysostom, *Epistle I towards Theodore II*; G.P. 47: 292.

⁴⁶¹ Unidentified text.

⁴⁶² Not a part of the godlike nature of the Word dwelled into His body, but the whole one. This is for, He has become the whole hypostasis of the human nature, as He also bears the whole human nature. Of course, He covered it through the humbleness of the descent. And we cannot receive that either at once or gradually. To be noticed that the glory or the light irradiates into the concrete matter out of the godlike Person, and it have been made accessible

Makarios the Great calls it as the glory of the Ghost⁴⁶³. How one can say, therefore, that the godhead, the shininess, and the glory of that above-being nature⁴⁶⁴, now it is, and not it is not, coming and passing, appearing and disappearing, not hiding itself from the worthy ones, but passing into inexistence, as the fancies, as the symbols, as the riddles, and as many as are told by these daring people, who present also those who oppose them, as agreeing them? They understand the godlike Dionysus and Maximus, and they do that while not noticing the fact that the wise one in the godlike knowledge, Maximus, he has called the light from the Transfiguration of the Lord as “symbol of the theology” (of the godhead) in the sense that we are shared with it according to our measure, but that light also directs us towards something even higher (αναλογικώς και αναγωγικώς)⁴⁶⁵.

22. The fact that all the realities which subsist and which are produced, they are called in the analogical and anagogical theology, commonly as symbols, Saint Maximus could call, as well, this light as symbol⁴⁶⁶. That’s why he also entitled those words as “contemplation” (θεωρία)⁴⁶⁷, as also Gregory surnamed

to us through the Person of the Word become man. Withing any person, there is an inexhaustible spring of life and light, by the connection the person stays in with God, according to the person’s nature. But the endless thesaurus of life and of light of the godhead, it is wholly and in an unmediated manner lived by Christ not only as God, but also as man. And we feel this whole thesaurus of Christ, even if, from another point of view, it is not wholly communicated to us. We live it as whole into Him, when we are in connection with Him, but not as become wholly ours.

⁴⁶³ *About Love* 21; G.P. 34: 925 C.

⁴⁶⁴ “Τὴν υπερονσιότητος εχέινης”. This term is taken from Dionysus the Areopagite.

⁴⁶⁵ Saint Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1160, 1125 A. At the holy fathers the term “analogical” didn’t have the scholastic meaning from later on, as knowledge “by analogy” to the created things, but it had the meaning as knowledge and receiving of God “according to the measure” of him who knows God and receives God. And the meaning “analogical” is opposed, at the fathers, on one hand, to the literal meaning of the word (Scripture), and on the other hand, it is opposed to the allegorical meaning. While the allegory uses something that hasn’t existed or it doesn’t exist, in order to indicate a godlike meaning, the anagogical interpretation sees a higher meaning in something that exists. So, Saint Maximus called the Transfiguration as “symbol of the godhead” in the sense that through it was shared the godhead “according to their measure” to the disciples who were there and that it hinted to something higher than itself, namely to the godlike being.

⁴⁶⁶ All the existing realities are and are called as “symbols”, in the analogical and anagogical theology, namely in that theology that shows their connection with the higher godlike content, which we are imparted with on the measure of our spiritual advancement. That’s why Saint Maximus could call the light from Tabor as “symbol”.

⁴⁶⁷ The most explanations given by saint Maximus in *Ambigua* are called as “contemplations”, for he finds in diverse types from the Scripture or from nature, a higher – or anagogical – meaning.

the Theologian, he called “contemplation” the tree of the knowledge of the good and of the evil⁴⁶⁸. Saint Maximos declared that light as Symbol of the godhead, due to his contemplation that looked at the higher realities. But that didn’t mean to him as contrivance and inconsistent symbol. This is for, the godlike Maximos declares Mose and Elijah as “symbols”, on as symbol of the judgment and another as symbol of the Providence⁴⁶⁹. Did he do that for those weren’t really present, but they were symbolically contrived? But Peter? Isn’t him symbol of the faith to him who wants to contemplate him, by elevating him on a higher level? Or, aren’t: James a symbol of the hope and John a symbol of the love? And Christ Himself, on Tabor, “He showed Himself, as the same Maximos says, them who can follow Him, in the image of God, which He was created in before the world existed”, isn’t Him a symbol of the ascension through all virtues?

Can you see what that light was, that surrounded the disciples there? In that light, the chiefs of the apostles saw God transfigured, and they “were moved from body into Ghost before finishing their life into body”⁴⁷⁰. Do you see that it wasn’t seen, that light, through the senses, before their sense were transformed by the Ghost? That’s why too, that light couldn’t have been seen by those who were nearby, despite it shined more powerfully than the sun. Thus speaks, therefore, this one.

23. And the Great Dionysus calls this light as simple, shapeless, above-nature, namely above all existing realities⁴⁷¹. Therefore, how could be submitted to the senses, or symbolical, such a light?⁴⁷² So, by wanting him to write about that light, as

⁴⁶⁸ *Word no. 43*: 12; G.P. 36: 374 C.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1168 C.

⁴⁷⁰ “They were moved from body into Ghost, before finishing their life into body”. So, while remaining into body, their life into body were overwhelmed by the works of the Ghost. Their body was filled up by the Ghost Who gave them the power of seeing, even through their senses, the realities which are above senses. This expression belongs to Saint Maximos the Confessor, *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1125-1128.

⁴⁷¹ Here is being repeated the fact that not only the godlike being, but also the godlike light, they both are above what can receive the attribute as “existing”. This is because of that attribute being characteristic to the creatures. One can see from here that in the Orthodox teaching, the apophatic isn’t simply non-experienceable, in the sense of the negative intellectual theology. The apophatic is being experienced but though it is above what “exists”, what is thought, and what is expressed.

⁴⁷² If it is not submitted to the senses, that light won’t either be symbolical, in the meaning of a sensitive reality that would symbolize an insensitive reality.

a mysterious seer and as a sure knower and as a servant of that light, he says: "Our godlike advisers taught us for the present life, in a sensitive manner, the intelligible realities, and with the help of the existing realities, they taught us the realities from above-being, and, through a multitude of divided symbols, they taught us that above-nature and above-shape simplicity. But when we become incorruptible and immortal and when we reach that all-happy and into the image of Christ state, then we are always with Christ, full of his showing through all-luminous sights; this is for His showing will bath us in all-luminous flashes"⁴⁷³. Can you see that this light is above not only to senses, but to all existing realities, and that this light is above-nature?

24. Now we look at this light by senses and divided symbols; but then, us by reaching above these, we will look at the eternal light in an unmediated manner, because of not being there, in the middle, any curtain⁴⁷⁴. This was said, clearly, by the godlike interpreter of these things: "Now, he says, we see as through a mirror and in riddle; but then, face to face" (1 Cor. 13: 12). By saying "now", he showed that sight that is possible and according to our nature. But him, by surpassing this one, and by being elevated above senses and above mind (above understanding), he saw the unseen realities and he heard the unheard realities (2 Cor. 12: 4), and he received within himself the earnest of the second birth and of the sight related to it. That's why too, he said: "I know", for I heard and I saw. He reckons this as a work of the mind. But again, he says that he doesn't know if he was mind or body that what felt. So, this feeling is above feeling and mind (above understanding). This is for, when any of those works, and the fact that any of these works, one feels it and understands it. That's why he adds: "God knows", for God was The One Who worked then. And he reached above-man, through his union with God, and so he saw the unseen realities through The Unseen One Who, realities which, without descending from that above-feeling sphere, they became seen.

⁴⁷³ *About the Godlike Names*; G.P. 3: 592 BC.

⁴⁷⁴ Though during the prolonged prayer, the godlike light is sometimes seen in an unmediated manner, by and large, during the earthly life, this light is seen through creatures as symbols. Only in the future life this light will be seen, ceaselessly, in an unmediated manner.

25. So, neither the Great Dionysus declared the sight of the eternal light as a sight submitted to the senses, when he said that that light can be seen, for he said that that light can be seen only by them who are in the image of Christ⁴⁷⁵. You will find out that in other places too, he calls as visible that light that is above-feeling. “This is for, if the freedom of the understanding creatures wanted to jump, daringly, over the borders of what it was given to them in order they to receive it with measure, they wouldn’t obtain anything except those ones of the light; and they would even lose what it they were given with measure”⁴⁷⁶. Therefore, if the sight of the understanding beings isn’t separated from that sight that is above-feeling, thought it is visible, what won’t be above-senses for, the sight of them who have reached to be in the image of Christ, even if it is visible? But that seen showing of God, it is not only above senses, but it is also above mind (above understanding). So explains Saint Maximos too: “The Ghost, he says, it gives us then, through deification, the ceasing of all natural works of the body and of the mind, so that God is The One Who shows Himself through soul and through body”⁴⁷⁷. So, both the mind and the body they receive the same light, each one receives that light according to itself, but in an above-senses manner⁴⁷⁸. “The seen showing of God” and “the above0mind union”, which Dionysus speaks about, they do not differ at all. Besides, since

⁴⁷⁵ *About the Churchly Hierarchy* 7: 2. G.P. 3: 553 D. That light is “seen”, but it is not sensitive. This contradiction is reconciled by the fact that that light is seen by them who are reached in the image of Christ. This is for, Christ as embodied God He “sees” the above-feeling realities, by experiencing those within Himself. The “sight” of this light means, therefore, to experience it spiritually. Saint Simeon the New Theologian says: “We will become limbs of Christ, if Christ becomes our limbs. Christ becomes my hand, He, my leg...oh, I the miserable one; and the hand of Christ, and the leg of Christ, they are me, the sinner. I move my hand and my hand if Christ whole... I move my leg, and behold that my leg lightens like Him” (*Hymn 15; Hymnes*, quoted edition, tome I, *Sources chrétiennes*, no. 156, p. 287).

⁴⁷⁶ *About the Churchly Hierarchy* 2: 3; G.P. 3: 397 D – 400 S.

⁴⁷⁷ *Theological Heads* 88; G.P.: 1168 A.

⁴⁷⁸ Another paradox: the godlike light is seen after all the works of the senses and of the mind cease. Consequently, as it is not felt in a natural manner, likewise it cannot be understood in a natural manner. That light is seen throughs senses and it is known through mind, for within those it dwells a power that is above the natural powers of theirs. Still, the senses and the mind impropriate that work that is above their natural works. So, they experience the seeing and the understanding of that light. This is for, that light is given to them, and they do not conquer that light. And for they are given that light, they are given also the power of receiving that light. One person’s openness towards us, it gives us the power to know that person. All the more is so the Self-giving as a gift, of the godlike Person.

we won't need air and space there, as they tell us the speakers about God, what will we need like the sensitive light?⁴⁷⁹

26. But Paul by reaching into God and by seeing the unseen ones of God, into ecstasy (in the going out of himself), did he see the being of God? Who would dare to say that? Likewise, they who are clean in their hearts through appeasement (*hesychia*), by being found worthy of seeing the unseen realities, the being of God remains untouched. They who are found worthy of this sight, they mysteriously receive the teaching about it too, and they cogitate about it. Thus, they are imparted with the gift of the intelligible light of God, with their mind liberated of passions and immaterial. But they know, in the same time, that the godhead is above even to these sights and above the knowledge coming from these sights. And thus, this above-mind knowledge is superior to the mind's knowledge. They do not reason about God out of the fact that they do not see God, but through itself the sight, they see what is above seeing; by experiencing, to say so, the exceeding of all realities, and not by cogitating it⁴⁸⁰. As experiencing and seeing the godlike realities is something else than the affirmative and superior to it theology, likewise experiencing the disappearance of all realities it is something else and it is superior to the negative theology, because of the overwhelming of what is seen and cogitated, by the spiritual sight⁴⁸¹.

⁴⁷⁹ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *About Soul and Resurrection*. G.P. 46: 104 C. The sensitive light will be overwhelmed there, entirely, by that above-senses light, as the air and the space will be too.

⁴⁸⁰ The speculative theology, either it is affirmative or it is negative, it isn't a theology of the sight. The speculative theology is born right out of not seeing God. They who see God, they do not need a speculative theology. They too make an apophatic theology, or a negative theology (better said, a theology of the untold), but their theology isn't born out of not seeing God, but it is born out of the fact that even through seeing they know that God is above sight and above understanding. The seen itself is unseen, the know itself is unknown, from another point of view. They do not cogitate at removing all the existing realities (of the known world), but they experience them through seeing what is above them. They see that God isn't anything of the realities which can be seen, understood, and expressed on the plan of the world.

⁴⁸¹ The sight of God is superior to the rational affirmative and negative theology. It is the experiencing of the godlike reality, and does not mean inventing or supposing the godlike reality, with the cogitation, with the mind, or with the imagination. It is superior to the negative theology for the disappearance of all realities isn't forcedly produced by thinking, but because all the created realities and their ideas are overwhelmed or covered by the real sight of the light above nature. This apophatic is an endless plus, and it is not a minus in comparison to the realities known through senses and rationality. The unseen isn't simply

Is somebody saw the sun's disk in a mirror, more luminous than the sun from up in the sky, so that his sight was overwhelmed by the lightning of that disk, of course that he would see, by exceeding, also the unseen archetype, and not by seeing it but by unseeing it. Likewise, they too who are found worthy of that all-blessed sight, not by negation, but through that above-seeing-sight into Ghost, they know this deifying work; all the more they know Him Who produced this work⁴⁸². They who learn from those ones, though, they are imparted only with the mental gift (the intellectual knowledge) of the light, and they can ascend towards God through negation; but they to obtain such a sight, and through that sight and with that sight they to see what is not being seen out of God, it will be impossible to them, if they do not reach also that above-nature, spiritual, and above-mind union⁴⁸³.

27. This is for, Stephen too, as Gregory of Nyssa says, "not by remaining in the human nature and power, he sees the godhead, but for he is mixed with the grace of the Holy Ghost; thus, through what is alike he sees the alike realities, as the Scripture confesses (Ps. 35: 9⁴⁸⁴; 1 Jn. 3: 2). This is for, if the glory of the Father and of the Son had fitted in the human nature and power, he who declares the sight as non-comprised, he would have lied. But that one doesn't lie to us and the history is real"⁴⁸⁵. Was that the feat of the human nature? Or it was the feat of some angel who elevated the human nature - that was crawling down - at that height? Not at all. Because it wasn't written that Stephen, by having much power, or by being filled up with the angelic help, because of that he saw what he

unseen. The unsees is seen; the non-understood and the unknown are experienced more intensely than the seen and known realities on the plan of the created realities are.

⁴⁸² Through the above-seeing-sight the spiritual people know the deifying work, so they know it as active seeing within them. Right because of that, they know that it that light works the godlike Subject, or the Person Who produces this working sight. He is especially known the Holy Ghost. The apophatic is an unmediated relation with the Person of the Holy Ghost.

⁴⁸³ This means that are partaker to this sight only they who reach the union with the godlike Subject. They who only hear about this light from them who have this sight, they only can reach knowing God through the affirmative theology or through the rational negation.

⁴⁸⁴ In KJB we have: Ps. 36: 9: "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."; in KJB we have: "For at You is the spring of the life, into Your light we will see light." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁴⁸⁵ *Word no I at Saint Stephen*; G.P. 46: 171 B. God was seen through God. It is a union of subjects. The godlike glory doesn't fit in the human subject, but the Subject of the godlike glory, God Himself, He comes with the godlike glory within the human subject.

saw, but it was written that Stephe, for being full of Holy Ghost, he saw the glory of God and The Only Begotten Son of God (Acts 7: 55). "This is because of not being able to see the light, says the prophet, he who doesn't look out of light"⁴⁸⁶. And if we see in the parental light, into the Ghost, the Son as light, it will be obvious that we will be having an unmediated union with God and a communication of the light from there, and not a transmission of that light through the mediation of the angels. Our philosopher, though, he doesn't admit that, and he reckons that the Great Dionysus teaches as he teaches too, and this is because the philosopher doesn't understand the meaning of the theology of this speaker-about-God.

28. It is right that the Great Dionysus says, by discovering the cause of the name angel, he says that "many views are shown to us through angels"⁴⁸⁷. But he doesn't say that all the godlike showings, or all the unions, or all the illumination, all of these would be done through angels.

This is for, by saying that that all-extolled doxology was conveyed to the people on earth at the birth of Christ, by a great army of angels, and that the angels heralded the birth to the shepherds, as they were cleaned through a withdrawn and quiet living, he doesn't say that the glory of God that illuminated the shepherds, it was conveyed too, through angels⁴⁸⁸. But the glory that was illuminating the shepherds, it hadn't unveiled the mystery of the salvation to the shepherds, and, on the other hand, because of being the shepherds engulfed by fear, because they weren't accustomed to such visions, the angels heralded them what the showing of that light meant. The Virgin Mother too, She was announced by angel, that She will take God in Her womb and She will give Him birth according to the body, but God's union with Her hadn't been made through angel⁴⁸⁹. But we must say that here too, neither Her was taught through the union itself, but there was needed a herald to herald that. But what we would prolong this discussion for, because himself that one says limpidly that "through the same union from above, which are imparted with, also the angels who are worthy of the

⁴⁸⁶ Ps. 36: 10 (vid supra); Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *Word no. I at Saint Stephen*; G.P. 46: 716 D – 717 A.

⁴⁸⁷ *About the Angelis Hierarchy* 4: 2; G.P. 3: 180 B.

⁴⁸⁸ *About the Angelis Hierarchy* 4: 4; G.P. 3: 181 B.

⁴⁸⁹ So, the mediation of God through angels, it is limited. God can communicate on Himself in an unmediated manner too.

knowledge that is above the angelic knowledge, the mind which have reached in the godlike image is united too, like the angels are, when any work of the mind it ceases"⁴⁹⁰. Or: "As, according to the opinion of the knowers into our holy mysteries, being one filled up with the godlike realities in an unmediated manner, it is a more consummate thing than being imparted with them through other people, likewise I believe that the unmediated impartation of the angelic groups, which are elevated through them at God, it is more intense than the impartation of those which are consummate through mediation"⁴⁹¹. Zachariah sees one of the first angels which stay around God, as the Great Dionysus teaches us too⁴⁹². And Hezekiel says that "this law was established in a total holly way by Himself the all-extolled Godhead that thrones on Cherubs"⁴⁹³.

29. Thus, not only at angels, but within us too, there take places visions about God, and not only mediately through others, but also unmediated visions which do not pass from them who are in the first row to them who are in the second row, through transmission. This is for our Lord is the Lord of the lords, so that he isn't submitted to the laws of the creation. According to our holy teachings, Gabriel is the first and the only one introduced into the mystery of the untold descent (kenosis) of the Word, though he doesn't belong to that angelic group placed in the first row and around God in an unmediated manner. He must only be the beginning of the new creation. This is for, He Who descended for us all the way down to us, He has made everything new (Apoc. 21: 5; 2 Cor. 5: 17)⁴⁹⁴. That's

⁴⁹⁰ *About the Godlike Names* 1: 5; G.P. 3: 593 B. The angels themselves, they do not reach the knowledge about God, because of being that knowledge above their nature. They only can do that through the union with God. Likewise, the people do not reach that knowledge except through the same union, by imitating the angels and by being they imprinted by God.

⁴⁹¹ *About the Angelic Hierarchy* 8: 2; G.P. 3: 240 C.

⁴⁹² *Quoted Word*, col. 241 A.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid*; Ezek. 10: 18.

⁴⁹⁴ In the fact that God can enter both the unmediated and mediated communication with the people, through angels, or with the angels which are on inferior levels, it is shown God's character as free Person. The communication of His life isn't being done as the involuntary emanation out of an impersonal sun, as in the Neoplatonic conception, and whose power weakens on the measure we get farer from the source, and which constitutes ever weaker degrees of existence, and of the measure they are mediated by increasingly numerous superior levels. The accusation of Neoplatonism that sees the light of God as a weakened emanation of God's being (ἀπόρροια), accusation which Palamas was charged with, in the quoted issue of the Dominican review "Istina" (p. 276), it is an unjust one (See the article published by Jean-Miguel Garrigues o. p.: *L'énergie divine et la grâce chez Maxime le Confesseur*).

why, by elevating to heavens the angels who are on the lower levels, and especially on those who are from around the world, it makes those angels, as Saint Cyril says, illuminators and accomplishers of the group from above⁴⁹⁵. Thus, these angels can command them who are on a higher level, to “lift up the eternal gates”, and they can teach the angels from a higher level that He Who has put on a body, for His endless love for people, He is going to enter and to sit above all principalities and powers (Eph. 1: 21). He is the Lord of the Powers and the Emperor of the Glory (Ps. 23: 10⁴⁹⁶), and He can everything, so that He can elevate the last ones above the first ones⁴⁹⁷.

But, before God’s showing into body, we haven’t learnt about such things at angels, neither at prophets, except at them who described, from before, the future grace⁴⁹⁸. But, for This One shows Himself now, there is no longer needed that all the things to be committed through mediation⁴⁹⁹. This is said by the Great Paul too: “Now, he says, it has been made known, through Church, to the principalities and to the masteries, that of-many-kinds wisdom of God” (Eph. 3: 10). Likewise says, the coryphée of the apostolical group, Peter: “The things which you have been heralded now, through them who heralded us through the Holy Ghost sent from heavens; towards those the angels from heavens want to look at” (1 Pt. 1: 12). The smaller things being thus made as the greater through grace, it is still maintained the order of the good organization in undiminished and wonderful manner.

30. He who has unveiled us the angelic names⁵⁰⁰, he has clarified and he has taught us, as good as one can get, also the reason why the angels were brought and called to existence in

⁴⁹⁵ Saint Cyril from Jerusalem, *Procatechesis* 15; G.P. 33: 360 A.

⁴⁹⁶ In KJB we have: Ps. 24: 10: “Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 23: 10: “Who is the Emperor of the glory? The Lord of the powers, This One is the Emperor of the glory.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁴⁹⁷ The supreme proof of the same character as Person and of the same freedom, it is, though, the fact that God makes Himself man and so God elevates the man who is reckoned as the last one in the hierarchy of the rational beings, and God elevates the man endlessly above everyone, for God is the Emperor of the powers and of the glory.

⁴⁹⁸ Before the embodiment there reigned the law, but the law of the hierarchy, at its turn, it was wanted by the God-Person, because of the man’s falling, and not because of the nature constituted of gradual layers of existence. That’s why the law was given through angels (Acts 7: 50; Gal. 3: 19; Eph. 2: 2).

⁴⁹⁹ By making Himself man, God comes in unmediated communication with the people.

⁵⁰⁰ *About the Angelic Hierarchy* 4§ 2§ G.P. 3: 180.

the beginning. And the fact that the angel who was entrusted with the mystery of the Word's descent to us, though he was an army leader, he wasn't amongst them who are placed, in an unmediated manner, around God, you can find out that fact as it was told by prophets. This is because, actually, this angel is on occasion called by another angels who has a higher rank, as by a commander, and he hears being told him, commandingly: "Interpret him the vision" (Dan. 8: 16). We must notice here too, that that one doesn't say: "Teach him the vision", but he says: "Interpret him the vision".

By and large, you can see that the gift of the knowledge is most often given through mediations, but the visions of God most often show themselves in themselves. That's why the Scripture says, that in the time of Moses too, the imprinted law was given through angels, but the seeing of God wasn't. But the interpretation of the seeing was given through angels. And through the mysterious visions are shown diverse things: existing, future, sensitive, intelligible, material, immaterial, superior, inferior, and of other sorts. And each of them is unveiled differently, according to the power of them who see the visions, and according to the purpose of God.

And itself the showing of Him Who is beyond all realities, it illuminated for other and other reasons and with other powers, within the holy dwelling places, or in other places, to them who were elevated up to those ones, or to the prophets, as the Great Dionysus says⁵⁰¹. This is the truth, despite the fact that this philosopher called himself blind and he thrown himself, as a blind man, upon everyone without discernment, or better said he didn't know everything, but he asks us who preach, as much as it is possible, about the eternal light, to count up the chariots (4⁵⁰² Kings 2: 11) and the wheels (Jez. 1: 15, 21; Dan. 7: 9) and the spears and the other things of this sort, as they would have been honored equally as the light of the future age is. Hasn't him head from the Holy Scripture not even that "then the godlike nature will be to us instead of everything"⁵⁰³, so that he to believe, on the ground of that, that that light belongs to God?

⁵⁰¹ *About the Godlike Names* 1: 8; G.P. 3: 597 A. Through all this great variety, it is shown God's character as Person Who pursues and fulfills freely the oikonomia of the salvation.

⁵⁰² In KJB we have: 2 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁵⁰³ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *About Soul and Resurrection*; G.P. 46: 104 B.

31. Actually, nobody saw God (Jn. 1: 18), neither will somebody see God; neither man, nor angel. But this is for there is angels and man who see sensitively or intelligibly (αἰσθητῶς ἢ νοητῶς). This is for he has reached to be ghost, and by looking into Ghost how will he not see alike with alike, according to the words of the speakers-about-God?⁵⁰⁴ But also to the seeing into Ghost, that light that dwells above all realities, it appears to still be totally hidden. This is because, which amongst creatures could comprise within itself the endlessly strong power of the Ghost, so that through it to see everything that belongs to God?⁵⁰⁵ But what I am saying about that hidden? Even the shininess of that light, which has in a strange way (paradoxically) as matter (as means) the sight of him who looks, by getting bigger that spiritual eye and by making that eye able to comprise increasingly more of that light, just that light, they say, it won't ever end lighting up that eye with ever shinier rays and to fill that eye up with an ever more hidden light, and that light to unveil though itself, to that eye, things which have never been seen before⁵⁰⁶. That's why the speakers-about-God they call this light too, as endless. Through this light, when any power of knowledge ceases, God makes Himself known to the saints, uniting Himself, through the power of the Ghost, as God with gods, and being seen by these ones. This is for, through the impartation with the Highest One, they are changes too towards what is higher, and, we to say with the Prophet: "moving their strength", the stop doing any work of their soul and of their body, so that it will no longer shown, and it will no longer seen through them except That One, because of being overwhelmed the natural features

⁵⁰⁴ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5: 1; Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *Word no. 1 at Saint Stephan*; G.P. 46: 717 B; Basile the Great, *At Psalms* 8; G.P. 29: 449 C.

⁵⁰⁵ Which creature can comprise in itself the whole power of God? To which created power it can become internal the whole godlike power?

⁵⁰⁶ It will be open the perspective of an eternal growth in the knowledge of the light of the love of God, or of the impartation with that light. This is not only for that light will emit, out of itself, ever shinier rays, but also for the feeling of the spiritual eye of him who sees or feels, it will be ever more accentuated in its capacity of seeing that light, through the ray of the light that penetrates the spiritual eye. Thus, that eye that sees, it won't be only a subject of the vision that is shown to it, but that eye will also be a matter which the sight makes it ever more seer, and more transparent. The wood not only fuels up the fire, but it is also continuously adapted by fire in order to fuel up the fire more intensely. Seeing that light is, paradoxically, or contradictorily, also an act of the man, but also a matter of the seeing of that light. Of course, here is about a wood that won't be consumed by fire.

by the abundance of the glory⁵⁰⁷; “in order God to be everything in all things”, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 15: 28). This is for, by being sons of the comforting, we will be also sons of God; “and like the angels of God in heavens, who always see the face of our Father Who is in heavens: (Mt. 22: 30; 18: 10), as the Lord says.

32. That’s why the Great Dionysus, at his turn, by saying that: they who have reached that blessed state and in the image of Christ, they will be filled up with the seen showing of God”; and he adds up, a little further on: “into a more godlike imitation of the ghosts from above skies”⁵⁰⁸. And further on, by mentioning also the unions of the angels with God, unions which are characteristic only to the angels who have been found worthy of exceeding the angelic knowledge, namely to the good angels, given that that knowledge is a gift or a good received from the all-shiny kindness, he continues saying that “also the minds (νόας) of the people reached in the image of God, those minds are united too, alike to angels, with this light, and those minds extoll this light by denying all realities, but those mind learn not by negation, but by union with that light, that that light is in a supra-existential manner, above all realities”. So, through the union with this light that is above all realities, and that exceeds all existing realities, they who reach that union they learn that that light exceeds or it is above all creatures, namely not out of removing all realities, but, due to that union, they see that all realities are removed⁵⁰⁹.

⁵⁰⁷ This was said, somewhere, by Saint Maximos the Confessor. God alone sees and He is seen through them. But the man impropriates the sight of God as it would be his own. But Saint Maximos discerns, though, between the productive and the receptive or experiencing sides of the knower power (*Opuscula theologica*; G.P. 91: 33). The last one remains within saints in tehri states of ecstasy and in the future life. According to the teaching of the holy fathers, somewhere it disappears the border between the understanding of the godlike realities and seeing those realities. Between two persons who understand one another, there is also a certain spiritual touch. But this touch becomes even more conscious and more intense within them who are spiritually advanced. That’s why the godlike light is called also as intelligible light or as understood light (νοητον), but also as seen (ορατόν). They who see this light, they see it through an understanding, they who understand this light through a “sight”, or through a touch of it by their mind. In this sense, this light isn’t material and it has no image.

⁵⁰⁸ *About the Godlike Names* 1: 4; G.P. 3: 592 BC.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid* 1: 5; G.P. 3: 583 BC. Those minds which have reached alike angels and in the image of God, by being united with the godlike angels, those minds herald that light to others by using negative terms, but experiencing that light isn’t something negative, for there is a union with that light. The intellectual apophatic is only a matter of describing by using words. In reality, the apophatic is a positive experience. Still, the union with the light is, in the same

Thus, also this union is above and outside all realities. That's why, one can say about this light that it doesn't exist, in sense of exceeding (μη ον, καθ' υπεροχήν εστιν)⁵¹⁰. This is for, what not even the angels can comprise, except only for they have been found worthy of that knowledge that is above angels, it is possible to may be comprised by some power of the mind, because of surpassing even this power of the mind.

33. And that what is above all mind's power, so that it cannot be comprised by mind, that is above all existing realities⁵¹¹. And that what exceeds any power of understanding, namely that what cannot be comprised by understanding, it is above all existing realities and, therefore, this union too, it is above any knowledge, even though, metaphorically, it is called as knowledge.

This light isn't, therefore, either intelligible (νοητον), even though it is also called so. This is because, what is above mind, what could that be intelligible⁵¹² like? One could call this also as nescience, in the sense of exceeding, and this is rather much

time, a denial of all realities, because it covers all of them. So, the union as positive experience is that one that shows that all realities are denied, and not their rational denial.

⁵¹⁰ Neither the experienced union can be described by using terms borrowed from creatures. The experience has such a thin character, such indeterminate, such unnoticeable, so that one can tell that it doesn't exist. But this in the senses of exceeding all thickened experiences of the creatures. That's why it cannot be called as knowledge. Even from intellectual point of view, it presents the same thinness or non-determinability.

⁵¹¹ All existing realities, namely all the creatures, they are made so that they can be known by the mind, or the mind is made so that is able to know them. This is for the mind has, at its turn, in its being and in its works, the attribute of the existence. That's why, the mind cannot know God through its own natural works, because God is above the category of the existence. The mind must be endowed by God Himself, with His work that is above the mind's natural works, in order the mind to be able to know God. So, we are far from the Neoplatonic and of Evagrius pantheism, a pantheism reckoning that the mind, by finding its ultimate unity, that mind knows - by itself - God Who is One. Here is being clearly affirmed the transcendence of God. But, is it impossible to establish any bridge between mind and God? The faith admits the power of the grace. The grace can be appropriated by the mind. The mind can become the subject of the grace, or the subject of the work of God. The mind can become the subject of the knowledge of God by grace, or partaker to the self-knowledge of God. The mind, as subject, it can be imprinted by the godlike Subject.

⁵¹² If that light is above all existing realities, or if that light is the negation of all existing realities, neither the union with it will be called as knowledge in the usual meaning of the word. That light can be called as knowledge only in the metaphorical meaning of the word knowledge. That doesn't mean that that light has no meaning, but it means that that light comprises a meaning that exceeds all meanings and it has all meanings within itself, in a virtual manner. That's why, on one hand that light is called as intelligible, and on the other hand it isn't called as intelligible.

more recommendable that using the word knowledge⁵¹³. So, it isn't a part of the knowledge, it neither is a species of the knowledge, as what is above-being isn't a species of the being. That light couldn't be part, everywhere, to the domain of the knowledge by and large, and the knowledge by and large, it couldn't be able to comprise this light too. This light can rather be comprised in the domain of the nescience. But neither that it quite right. This is because that light is nescience in sense of exceeding, namely above even to nescience. So, this union has something unique and any name somebody would give to it: either union, or sight, or feeling, or knowledge, or understanding, or illumination, it won't be, actually, any of these, or, all of these are actually due only to it⁵¹⁴.

34. So, the treaties of the philosopher "About Knowledge" are an obvious nescience. Actually, he calls this one there as a part and as a species of the general knowledge, because it is also called, at its turn, as knowledge; and he compares this one to that one⁵¹⁵. He didn't realize that, if this one had the knowledge as genre due to the name, it would have the nescience too, since it has also the name of nescience; and it has the name of nescience even more than it has that of knowledge. Consequently, one and the same thing would stay under two contradictory genres; and what is above it would be underneath too, and what is unique and above any multiplicity it would be placed in line with the multiplicity.

But what increases this insanity even more, it is that he doesn't only simply say that the union is a subordinate part, but he argued there that it is above knowledge, and so he deemed right that here as species and subordinate part of the knowledge, he makes it even worse, by and large, that the knowledge. It is like somebody would say, about that one that is the only one above being, that that would be part and subordinate species of the beings, due to the name, namely on the basis that that is and that is called as being, and then he would dare to compart it to the genre of the being by and large.

⁵¹³ The knowledge provided by this light can be rather called as nescience, but in the sense that it exceeds all the knowledge, and it doesn't resemble to any knowledge.

⁵¹⁴ Only to this light are due all the positive names in proper sense, or neither of them is due to this light because of the imperfect meaning they have when referring to creatures, namely that meaning we are accustomed to.

⁵¹⁵ Palamas affirms the total transcendence of the knowledge into Ghost, while Barlaam includes even the knowledge of God amongst the knowledge referring to creatures.

He mixes up the unmixed ones, and he places above knowledge what is under the knowledge.

But, because in this way he compares the knowledge to what is above knowledge, he deemed the “above” (knowledge) as an unessential adding. By doing so, he deemed a thing as one with itself, then he stupidly compares them. Then, if because to the simple reason of the name, the above-knowledge knowledge it would be a species of the knowledge by and large, they who say that there are ten genres of things, they would be wrong. If that was the case, there it would be only one genre: the existence. And what is above all realities, it would be under this unique genre. And by being united with this one, all the other produce another existence better than this one genre of the existence. Likewise, given the fact that there is a touching above touching (αφή υπέρ αφή) and there is a sight above sight and, simply speaking, there is a feeling above feeling – this is because also these ones receive the same names for understanding – if what is above feeling it was a species of the feeling, the feeling would be higher than what is above feeling. And it would be the same with each of the mentioned ones.

35. But let’s come back. What is, therefore, that union that is nothing from the existing realities, in the sense of exceeding? Is it a theology through negation? But it is union and not negation. And, for negation, we do not need ecstasy⁵¹⁶, neither the angels do, while for that union both us and the angels need ecstasy. In addition to that, he who doesn’t make theology by negation, he won’t a non-believer one. But amongst believers are imparted with this union only the deified ones. Then, we can understand and express that theology done through negation. But this union is unspoken and non-understood even by them who see, as the Great Dionysus said⁵¹⁷. Then, the light of that theology is some knowledge and a

⁵¹⁶ It might be futile, or redundant (or it might not...), mentioning here that is about spiritual ecstasy. (E. I. t.’s n.)

⁵¹⁷ *About the Godlike Names* 1: 5; G.P. 3: 593 BC. In this paragraph Saint Gregory Palamas undertakes a more insisting discernment between union and the knowledge of the existing realities, and then between union and theology by negation. The knowledge occupies itself with the existent categories. That union that takes place between us and God, it is above the existing categories. The theology by negation still is a knowledge; the union is above the theology by negation too. You can avoid making theology by negation and you will still be a believer. But to union reach only those believers which are imprinted by godhead. The theology by negation is understood and expressible; as such, the theology by negation is

reasoning (γνώσις τίς ἐστι καὶ λόγος). But the light of this sight is seen as subsisting in something (ἐνυποστάτος), working by understanding, and speaking spiritually and in a mysterious manner to the deified man⁵¹⁸. Actually, the mind understands the attributes we negate to God, by theologizing them (by reasoning about them) by negation⁵¹⁹. The mind is working here through unfolding (through conclusions). But this is union⁵²⁰. In addition to these, through the negative theology, the mind, after negating all the other realities, it negates even itself. But this is the union of the mind with God. And this is what the fathers told: “The end of the prayer is the kidnapping of the mind towards the Lord”⁵²¹. That’s why the Great Dionysus too, he says that through that light we are united with God⁵²². This is for, in prayer, the mind gradually rejects the connections with the existing realities, firstly with those realities which tie the mind to the shameful things, and evil, and by and large corruptible, and then with those which are in the middle and which transform the man towards worse or towards better, according to the purpose they are used on, which all their learning and knowledge are for. That’s why there is also an advice of the fathers “let’s not receive that knowledge that the enemy makes it spring out during prayer, in order us not to be

knowledge. The union is above understanding and above any expression. The union is more apophatic than the negative intellectual theology.

⁵¹⁸ The light of the intellectual theology is a knowledge and a reasoning. It is nothing else. The light of the sight is a subsisting reality different from our cogitation; it is hypostatized in the Hypostasis of Christ and, consequently, it is subsistent. That light even speaks to the deified human being, showing by that too, that it is a reality that differs from our reasoning, and it is even a personal reality, by being the manifestation of Christ. Here we are seeing the influence of Saint Simeon the New Theologian. By this, Saint Gregory Palamas is showing again, that according to him, this light isn’t an “emanation” thinned out of a pantheistic substance in the Neoplatonic sense (or anthroposophical), but it is Christ Himself as Person, in the modality of His manifestation towards the godlike persons.

⁵¹⁹ One theologizes through the rational negation that God is not a being, He is not righteousness etc. or that these attributes aren’t appropriate to describe God, for He is above them. So, the mind understands that God isn’t these attributes. But by that, the mind hasn’t reached God.

⁵²⁰ In the theology by negation, the mind unfolds itself, by negating, on at the time, the diverse features improperly attributed to God. In union, the mind is gathered whole into God Who is encountered in His unity as Person.

⁵²¹ John Climacus, *The Ladder XXCVIII*; G.P. 88: 1132 D. The union of the mind with God isn’t, therefore, the rational negation of the mind, but the mind is kidnapped into God, it is like the mind is “spellbound” by the wonder of God’s showing and love. The mind ends the interiorized and fiery prayer.

⁵²² *About the Godlike Names* 3; G.P. 3: 680 A.

robbed of what is higher”⁵²³. Then, after the mind has been slowly rejecting these ties, as also those ties with the things which are higher than these ones, the mind exits, whole, from the existing realities, during the clean prayer. This going out (εκστασις) is much higher than the theology by negation. This is for it is characteristic only to those who reached the dispassion⁵²⁴.

But the union still won’t take place, until the Comforter illuminates, from above, him who prays, by sitting in the upper room of the natural peaks and waiting for the promise of the Father, and until he won’t be kidnapped, thus, through unveiling, towards seeing the light. And this sight has a beginning also in what follows after beginning, which are different from one another, as they are more obscure or more limpid. But it doesn’t have an end. This is for, advancing in it goes endlessly, as in the case of the kidnapping into unveiling too. This is because, something else is the illumination, something else is the clear seeing of the light, and something else is the seeing of the things into light, which even the things from far come in front of our eye through, and which even the future things are shown as existing into⁵²⁵.

36. But speaking about these aspects and clarifying them it is above me. And, likewise, about the previously mentioned things. But they belong to our theme⁵²⁶. So, let’s come back to them. Therefore, seeing that light it is a union, though not lasting much except for the consummate ones. Because, what else could be the union with the light except a sight? Then, once this takes place after resting of all the mental works, how could be done except not through the Ghost? This is for the light is seen in a light and through a resembling light (Ps. 35: 9⁵²⁷). And

⁵²³ John Climacus, *The Ladder XXVIII*; G.P. 88: 1140 A.

⁵²⁴ So, one reaches the “sight” not through a simple “method”, or haphazardly.

⁵²⁵ Amongst the countless stages of the sight, which one will endlessly advance into, during the future life, Saint Gregory is mentioning here three of them: *The illumination*, as a flashing light lasting only for an instant, *the clear seeing of the light* stretched everywhere, and *the seeing of the things*, of the circumstances, of the relationships, and of the souly states, present and future, in the variety of their indefinite richness.

⁵²⁶ Saint Gregory Palamas admits that is above his powers to speak about the realities of the future age. And, alike, about the realities of the present age too. But, because these are related to the theme he is speaking about, he will still attempt to speak about those.

⁵²⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 36: 9: “For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 35: 9: “For at You is the spring of the life, into Your light we will see light.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

he who sees, for he doesn't work in any way, because of being him outside all the other realities, he will become wholly a light⁵²⁸, and he will be transformed in the likeness of what he sees (τῷ ὁρώμενῳ ὁμοιοῦται); better said, he will even be united, in an unmixed manner, by being him light and by seeing light through light. If he looks at himself, he will see light; if he looks at what he sees, that will be light too; if he looks at that what he sees through, that will be light too. This is the union: to be all of these one, in order he who sees no longer be able to distinguish between that what he looks through and him who looks, except only that much that he knows that he is a light and that he looks at light, a light that is different from that of all creatures.

37. That's why the Great Paul too, he says that during that wonderful kidnapping, he didn't know about himself what he was (2 Cor. 12: 2). He was seeing himself, But how? Sensitively, rationally, or in an understanding manner (with the mind)? But, by being kidnapped, he went out of these powers. So, he was seeing on himself, through the Ghost Who commits the kidnapping. And what was he, because he wasn't able to comprise himself by any natural power, or, better said, he was untied of any natural power? Doubtlessly, he was that what he was united with, and he was that what he was knowing himself through, and that what he deserted everything for. This is for he has such a union with the light that not even the angels could reach it, if they haven't exceeded themselves by the grace that unites them. But he was then light and Ghost, which he was united with too, and which he had the power to be united too. So, he was outside all existing realities and he became that light by grace, or he wasn't even existing, in sense of exceeding, for he was above the created realities. This is for, the godlike Maximos says too: "He who has reached into God, he has left behind all the realities which are inferior than God"⁵²⁹. Or, again: "All the things, the names, and the dignities inferior to God, they will be underneath to them who will reach into God by grace"⁵³⁰.

⁵²⁸ Being occupied with regardless what else, through senses and through cogitation, it brings within us some sort of an inferior light, one belonging to another order. That's why him who is thus occupied, he cannot become wholly above-nature-light, except after there is no inferior light left within him, so that he will be filled, entirely, with the light from above.

⁵²⁹ *Gnostic Heads* 1: 54; G.P. 90: 1140; *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1200 B.

⁵³⁰ *Theological Heads* 1: 49; G.P. 90: 1101; *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1216 C and 1241 C.

But, for he reached then to be thus, the godlike Paul wasn't imparted, by any means, with the godlike being. The being of God is, therefore, above even what doesn't exist, in sense of exceeding, as it is above God too⁵³¹. This is for, inexistent in sense of exceeding, it is that what is spiritually seen through the feeling of the mind. And this isn't, at all, the being of God, but it is the glory and the shininess which are unseparated from His being, and which He unites Himself through, with the worthy ones amongst people and angels. And not only that, but for as the angels see God, the people see Him too in these ways, and they are united with God and they praise Him, it might be that the angel too, if he said that sight that is above his nature, the angel too would tell similarly to what Paul told: "I know an angel who saw, I do not know if he was an angel, God knows" (2 Cor. 12: 2-3). So, these visions of the saints are known only to God and to them who stay under the work of those visions, as says Gregory, the Speaker-about-God⁵³².

That's why, reckoning those visions as submitted to the senses, or reckoning them as hallucinations and symbols, and as being sensitive, and to likening them to the human knowledge, it won't be the deed of a man who realizes the limitlessness of the godlike height, one that wants to attract, with love for people, also our last fewness.

38. But behold, I have brought three witnesses, one out of each three groups of the Christian world: from amongst apostles, Peter; from amongst hierarchs Dionysus; from amongst hermits, Isaac, the knower of the appeasement life. And as it was written about the shepherds from the Lord's Birth, that immediately, at the word of the angel, they saw a multitude of heavenly army confessing together, likewise, in the same time with the word of the apostle rose together-voicing a multitude of apostles, and with the others two, a multitude of pious and priests. And this multitude, has given voice to a common confession, that there is a light that shows itself to the

⁵³¹ και ὑπὲρ το κατ ὑπεροχὴν μὴ ὄν (and beyond supreme non-being), if the godlike light isn't in sense of exceeding, the godlike being is above nonexistence too, in sense of exceeding. It is not lived as a reality that isn't like all the creatures are, but it simply isn't lived either like the sight that is lived, as not being like the existing realities. If the glory of God that is lived as the non-existing realities, in sense of their exceeding, it is called as God, His being is above God as lives by us as Person who is somewhat accessible.

⁵³² *Word no. 28: 19; G.P. 36: 52 B.*

saints, and that light is other than the knowledge out of all the creates realities; all the more holy as the glory of the nature of God is, and it is seen only by them who have reached in the image of God; and that is far from being a hallucination, or something close to the sensitive lights, or a symbolical contrivance according to their image; it is far from being that, for it is hypostasis⁵³³ and it is the beauty of the future age and it is the only true, eternal, unchangeable, without-evening, non-passing light, a light which we too become light through, and we become sons of the consummate light through.

So, are you gossiping these ones, who are so great, by calling them untaught and searchers for inhalations? Do you dare, you the philosopher, to say that they commit sin in what regards the being of God, they who are the seers of God, the wisemen of God, and the preachers of God? I fear that you will deprive yourself of being partaker to that light, as the saints are; I fear that you, by opening your mind, lest you attract to you a ghost that is contrary to the truth; lest you dogmatize, as being of God, what doesn't exist. This is because, that what you aim through your struggle, aspiring to show it with the greatest zeal, that there isn't any sight above the works of the mind, despite that only through this sight that surpasses the works of the mind it is shown, in the most limpid manner, and in a total special manner, that God is truly existing, as also that God is above the existing realities. This is for, how won't exist the being of God, if to those who were elevated through clean prayer above any sensitive reality, it is made seen, during prayer, itself the glory of that godlike nature? But in the same time, how won't be the being of God above everything that is sensitive (submitted to senses) and intelligible (thought with the mind), if God is above this sight that, at its turn, it is above all feeling and understanding?⁵³⁴

⁵³³ *"Hypostasis of the future age"* - foundation and content of the future age.

⁵³⁴ Even Saint Maximos the Confessor and Saint Gregory of Nyssa called the creatures as "the ones who are" (τα ὄντα), and they called God as "He Who is in existent manner" (ὁ ὄντως ὢν). In the existence of the creatures there is something precarious. They do not have the reason of their existence in themselves. They have been given their existence, and their existence can be taken away from them. God exist through Himself, eternally. Nothing is chewing away His existence. Saint Gregory Palamas is affirming now that experiencing this firm, eternal, inexhaustible, impossible to be diminished existence of God, it takes place only by seeing the glory itself of God, and that doesn't depend, in a natural manner, on the mind's works. This is because, there ones are made in order to know the creatures having a precarious existence, one not-founded in itself, because the mind itself is experienced in this

39. But, what the goods of the future age are? Aren't they above all the powers of our senses and of our mind? "This is for, what the eye didn't see and the ear didn't hear and at the heart of the man didn't ascend, those have been prepared by God to them who love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9). These ones will be seen then by the clean heart, according to saint Maximos⁵³⁵. How, then, there won't be any sight above all understanding (ορασις υπερ πασας τας νοησεις)?

No longer being able to oppose yourself, you cannot pretend too, sophistically, on the ground of the same name, that you agree it. This is because he who says, by using the metaphor and the identify of name, that what is above understanding, it still is understanding, because of the fact that that sight too, despite being above the name, it still is understanding, he no longer strives himself, later on, to show that that sight isn't above understanding⁵³⁶. Actually, he who told that isn't above understand what is above understanding, because of being that too called as understanding, he invokes as motif and excuse the identity of the name. But he who doesn't place that thing above the mind's works, he has no

works as having a precarious existence as well, an existence that isn't founded in itself. Everything is affected by incertitude in the natural knowledge of the mind, because the things which are known and the subject who knows them, are hit by a lack of foundation in themselves. The scholastic trust Barlaam had in rationality, as supreme and sole forum of decision in any matter, it didn't allow him to admit that God can be fully known only through a work that is above mind, a work given to the mind, as a gift, by God Himself. To Palamas, in the glory of God that is seen through a work of the mind given by God, as a gift, it is experienced – as through one that is the sole adequate to that – the intensity of unconditioned existence, one that cannot have its spring except in the being of God. The unconditioned intensity of the existence of this glory, one experiences it as being superior to the precariousness of existence characteristic to all the beings which are known through senses, and through any work of the mind. This one is therefore experienced, as having a more profound existence than all the sensitive and intelligible realities, namely than all the realities known through senses or through cogitation.

⁵³⁵ This is from: *One Hundred Theological Heads*, published by S. I. Epivanovici. To be seen at J. Hausherr, "Orientalia Christiania Periodica" no. 5, 1939, p. 231. At Hristou, *quoted work*, p. 572, note no. 5.

⁵³⁶ Barlaam would want to sophistically pretend that he agrees those who – by reckoning the sight as above understanding – they call it, as well, as understanding, as one that isn't contrary to understanding, but it is above understanding. He wanted to create the impression of agreeing that, but he only mentioned the name as "understanding" given to that sight. But he who really agrees something, he won't fight, later on, to demonstrate that that sight isn't above understanding. So, Barlaam couldn't oppose Palamas, neither could he pretend, sophistically, that he agreed Palamas.

excuse. This is because, that thing (the sight) couldn't be named as the work of the mind⁵³⁷.

But in that all-happy living in the endless age, the sons of the resurrection won't need, any longer, the things which uphold the life of the present age: neither air, nor light, neither fire, not any similar thing, but "instead of all things we will have the godlike nature", according to Gregory of Nyssa⁵³⁸. And according to Saint Maximos: "the deification from then, of the soul and of the body, it will give resting to all the natural works of the mind and of the senses, for, both through soul and body, God will show Himself, the natural traits being defeated by the overwhelming of the glory"⁵³⁹. Therefore, what that light is, that is seen with the bodily eyes, in the absence of the air? Isn't that light non-sensitive and above the whole natural knowledge? Isn't the glory of God that which envelops and fills up with light? And what is that makes us seers above all the work of the senses and above the whole understanding? Isn't that the Ghost of God Who, not only the mind, but also our body, He makes them spiritual (pneumatic)? How can be then, that there is no sight above understanding and there is no other light of the heart, except the knowledge?

40. But I reckon our faith as well, as being another kind of sight, of the heart and above all senses and understanding, for it exceeds all the understanding powers of our soul. I call as faith not the well-believing confession, but the steadfast founding on it and on the things promised by God. For, how can we see, through it, the things promised us in the future and endless age? Through senses? But the faith is "the hypostasis of the hoped things", and the sense couldn't see, by any craftsmanship, the future and what is hoped for. That's why, the apostle added too: "the proving of the things which are not

⁵³⁷ One can say about itself that "sight", that it isn't above understanding, because one cannot say that that isn't understanding. This is what Palamas does. And Barlaam pretends to agree him. But about that work which somebody is imparted with that sight through, one cannot say that it belongs to the mind. Barlaam can no longer hide the difference between himself and Palamas. This is because, while Palamas says that this is an understanding, but it isn't a work of the mind, Barlaam affirms that by being an understanding, it is a work of the mind. So, after pretending that he agreed Palamas, for the fact that he accepted that that sight is an understanding- to Palamas, though, that sight is above the natural understanding of the mind – Barlaam showed his true colors as opposing Palamas, by contesting that that understanding isn't a work of the mind.

⁵³⁸ *About Soul and Resurrection*; G.P. 46: 104 B.

⁵³⁹ *Gnostic Heads* 2: 88; H.P. 90; 1168 AB; *The Romanian Philokalia* II, p. 203.

seen” (Hebr. 11: 1). Therefore, can any power of the mind see the hoped-for things? But how could it see the things which have never ascended to the man’s heart? So, what’s next? Don’t we see, through faith, the things which God promised us, since they exceed all the works of the senses and of the mind?

But all of them who, from ever, they have been searching, through deeds, for the heavenly motherland, and who, according to the godlike apostle, they died without taking the promises, but by seeing the promises and by embracing the promises from far” (Hebr. 11: 13). So, there is both a sight and an understanding of the heart, above all the works of the mind. This is for, what is above mind it cannot be understood, except in the sense of exceeding. Because, otherwise, that will be a nonsense⁵⁴⁰.

41. But, if all of them who “have been martyred through faith, they haven’t taken the promise, for God planned for us a higher thing, that not to be committed without us? (Hebr. 11: 39-40), once they are consummate, won’t they see the promised things? Or, will they see the promised things, but without seeing those promised things above any understanding? Or above all understanding, but like before they became consummate? But what will be the reason in that? So, they will see and they will see above all understanding. And not as they saw before, but seeing will mean to them achieving the promised things. So, there is a sight above any understanding. And even before that one too. Actually, our faith is an above-mind sight. But, the achieving of the believed things, it is a sight above that sight that is above-mind⁵⁴¹. And, what is seen and possessed through that sight, by being above all the realities known with the senses and with the mind, it isn’t, as

⁵⁴⁰ The realities which exceed the understanding, they still have a meaning in themselves. But the realities which are below understanding, they have no meaning. The heart has an understanding that exceeds the understanding of the mind. This is for, the heart is the throne of Christ, the dwelling place of the grace, the opening towards the endlessness of the godlike Person. The heart has a transparency towards infinite, towards the richness of the sentiments which have their starting point and their satisfaction in the felt godlike love, which the mind doesn’t have it, but which the mind uses when the mind united itself with the heart.

⁵⁴¹ So, there is a sight above-all-understanding, but there is also a sight above this level too. This is for, a sight that is above all understanding, it is the sight of the faith. But in the future life, there will be a sight above the sight of the faith. And that for it will be the full possession of the things we saw, from far, through faith. The sight of the faith is had by that believer whose present life moves amongst the things from here. The sight of the future life will be moving amongst the goods from there, which are the highest.

well, the being of God, because the being of God is beyond that too, by exceeding. So, it is the hypostasis of the future goods⁵⁴².

Have you understood how much godlike greatness lose they who do not know this above-understanding sight? And how much more they extoll God, they who through the cleanness of their heart have tasted that sight, even for a little, and so they have within them the earnest of the future age, or, by receiving it through faith, they experienced, in many ways, the mysterious goods?

But the philosopher, by not giving room within him, to the height of this understanding, he didn't bring worshipping to God and glory worthy of God into Ghost, and on them who worship God into the Ghost of God, he reckons them as doing everything on the opposite. And he places them on the list of the blasphemers despite they are the only speakers-about-God who are spiritually advanced and worthy to be trusted.

42. And let's insist upon faith and upon the godlike and delighting sight of the godlike light. The faith is the cart of the apostolical power, the apostolical life, the righteousness of Abraham; out of faith it starts and into the faith it ends the whole righteousness, and out of faith will be alive every righteous one (Rom. 1: 17). He who disregards the faith, he will fall off the godlike benevolence. This is because "without faith there is no other possibility to be pleasant to God" (Hebr. 11: 7). The faith always keeps out generation free of all sorts of hallucinations and the faith founds us into truth and into us the truth, out of which no one will be shaken, even if the world reckons us as insane, us who through the true faith we go out through the ecstasy that is above understanding and we confess this truth with the deed and with the word, and we do not let ourselves "carried away by any wind of the teaching" (Eph. 4: 14), but we persevere in the knowledge of the truth of the Christians, and we preach that sight that is the simplest, the most godlike, and the truly undeceiving one.

But by leaving now the future realities, let's look with our above-mind sight (θεωρία) that belongs to the faith, at the thing which have been done since the beginning. This is for "through

⁵⁴² The hypostasis of the future goods, or their foundation, it is the godlike being, or the godlike Hypostases Themselves. This is for They are the foundation and the spring of those goods; those goods have their subsistence in the godlike Hypostases. Only the infinite Persons can be the spring of an infinite life, love, and happiness.

faith we understand that the ages have been done with the word of God... in order to be made, out of what was unseen, the realities which are seen" (Hebr. 11: 3). Which mind could understand what were then done like, all the realities, out of what wasn't at all, and that was done only by word? This is for what the works of the mind understand, of course it doesn't surpass these. This fact being understood by the wisemen of the Hellenes too, and by reckoning that nothing out of the realities which get corrupted does pass into nothingness, and that no one out of the produced realities comes from nothing, they cogitated the world as uncreated and endless. But the faith, by exceeding the ideas born out of looking at the creatures, it united us with the Rationality That is above all realities and with the unconstrued and simple Truth; And we have understood better than through a demonstration, not only the fact that all realities were made out of what didn't exist, but also the fact that they were made through the word of God. So, what is this faith? Is it a natural power, or is it above-nature? Without any doubt, it is above-nature, because "no one can come to the Father, except through the Son" (Jn. 10: 9), Who elevates us above ourselves and Who gives us the deifying simplicity and Who turns us towards the unity of the Father that gathers all realities.

That's why Paul "took grace towards obeying the faith" (Rom. 1: 5). That's why, if you confess Lord Jesus Christ with your mouth, and if you believe in your heart that God raised Him from dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10: 9). That's why are happier they who haven't seen by they have believed (Jn. 20: 29), than they who saw and believed into the One Who resurrected Himself from dead and Who is the One Who began the eternal life (Acts 3: 15). This is for, these ones, through the above-world-eye-of-the-faith, they saw and honored the realities which the eye, seeing them, it doesn't believe them through itself, and which the understanding cannot comprise.

43. "This is the victory that conquered the world, our faith" (1 Jn. 5: 4). This is, though it is strange to say it, the faith that upheld the world from beneath too, before, in diverse ways and times, and then, by transforming that world in a more-godlike world, and by elevating that world at the height of the skies, it has made sky out of earth too. Who guarded the seeds of the second world? Wasn't it the faith of Noah? Who made out of Abraham Abraam and father of many nations, like the sand

of the sea and like the multitude of the stars? Wasn't it the faith in those promises which were back then impossible to understand? For Abraam held his only begotten son for stabbing. And through him – oh, wonder – he believed, doubtlessly, that he had a multitude of sons. Wasn't, therefore, the old man seeming to them who looked at the things with the rationality (τῷ λογισμῷ) that he was insane? But the end of the things, led by the grace of God, it showed that the faith isn't an insanity, but it is knowledge that exceeds all cogitation.

Again, Noah was waiting, from the curved firmament of the sky, for deeps of waters. Where are the mumblings of the philosophy honored by you? "All the ones tending upwards and towards the middle: the light ones, the lither they are, the more they get far from the middle". Where is the rare and thin substance, the first one not being able to cover, while the second one crosses through the corps which are not too dense by nature? Where are the exact spheres and the curves, the moves of many sorts and of great speed, by which, you are searching for the truth out of existences, so that you roll yourself and your listeners, out of truth, and you make them prey to the flood, by learning out of experience that what they ignored, in an evil manner, by knowledge.

But they will receive their faith before their death, and it will bring them to truth through a good science and it will make them, through experience, as totally non-tempted and dispassionate when facing the evil. The faith will show them even through things that all the external philosophy is insane (1 Cor. 1: 20), as one that won't understand even then, as it doesn't understand either now, the word of the great Peter: "The skies were formed yore out of water and through water; and through water the world from then perished drowned. And the skies from now are kept for fire, being preserved for the doomsday and for the perdition of the unbelievers" (2 Pt. 3: 5-7). So, what do you say about the knowledge of God, knowledge that is withing Christians, and about the salvation through it? Is it that salvation through the knowledge of the philosophy, or is it through faith that makes through nescience, the knowledge of the philosophy as useless?⁵⁴³ If it is through knowledge, "the

⁵⁴³ The faith makes the philosophical knowledge as useless or unworking for salvation, through its nescience that is an above-knowledge-sight. This is for, the faith sees the Person of God and it enters that above-understanding-union with the Person of God, whilst the

whole faith will become vain” and the promise will be abolished, that “if you believe with your heart into Lord Jesus, you will be saved” (Rom. 10: 9). So, not him who has in his heart the knowledge about creatures will have God due to that knowledge which he has, but he who has believed in his heart into Lord Jesus, he will have God dwelling within himself⁵⁴⁴, through the non-spying faith.

44. But let's leave now them who through this knowledge didn't know God and let's overlook the fact that not all the knowledge out of philosophy it is true. Let's assume that all the philosophical knowledge is true, and so let's look at them who, through this knowledge about creatures, they knew God⁵⁴⁵. Contemplating and knowing through these creatures, it is called as natural law (Rom. 2: 14). That's why, even before Patriarchs, Prophets, and the written Law, the natural law called again the mankind and it turned them to God, by showing the Maker, to them who didn't go out of the natural knowledge characteristic to wisemen of the Hellenes. This is because, who won't know God, as in an icon, and as out of a caused work, if the man has mind and he sees so many manifest kinds of creatures, so many contrary powers and movements which come to balance through opposition, and then the stability that brings as well a balance on this way, and uninterrupted successions of contrary impulses, and unmixed union through unreconciled adversities, and unions of the distinct ones and mixings of the united elements of the minds, of the soul, and of the bodies, and the harmony born out of so many things, and the steadfast relations and positions, and the aptitudes and the orders of the substances, and the non-detaching of the whole? And who, by knowing God thus, he will reckon God as something amongst

philosophy remains at things, or it deems the person as an object, in order to be able – as it claims – to know the person.

⁵⁴⁴ The relation with the person is usually accomplished through faith, and not through the science that spies, because of science wanting to transform the person in an object constituted of multiple details. All the more the relation with God-Person is accomplished through faith, for the faith respects God-Person as Person and that's why the faith experiences God-Person in His specific intensity, simply and unitarily, and the faith find in God-Person, concentrated, alive, and carried by the intention of the love, all the goods searched for by the knowledge by separating them or by classifying them.

⁵⁴⁵ Saint Gregory Palamas didn't reckon that all the philosophical knowledge is wrong. He admits that all of it can be true. But to him, the philosophical knowledge shows its truth when out of the knowledge about creatures it will draw the right conclusion about the existence of God.

the caused realities or amongst the realities which are in His image?⁵⁴⁶ He will have, by that, also the knowledge about God by negation. So, the knowledge about creatures turned the mankind to the knowledge about God, before Law and Prophets. And now it still does that⁵⁴⁷. This is for almost the whole world, namely as many as they do not listen to the evangelical precepts, they owe only to the knowledge about creatures the fact that they do not have another God except the Maker of this world.

45. So, these ones know God only out of the knowledge of the created realities. They are those who haven't died to the law, through law, in order to live that life into Christ, or, better said, they haven't ever the law of God. But now, when God showed Himself into body, He has been believed amongst nations, he has been preached to the world (1 Tim. 3: 16), and the law of the grace has been unveiled to the edge of the earth, and when "we have taken the Ghost of God in order us to see the things given to us, as gift, by God" (1 Cor. 3: 13), and when we have been taught by God (Jn. 6: 45) and we have received the advises of the Comforter according to the comforting promise, for "That One, he says, he will teach you the whole truth" (Jn. 14: 26) – a truth that is not known yet – when he have "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 3: 16) and the spiritual eyes, do you still go back to live under the elements of this world as teachers of yours? What is your answer to that? We who "wait for a new sky and for a new earth, according to the promise" (2 Pt. 3: 13; Apoc. 21: 1), won't we understand and we won't extoll God out of those, in a supra-worldly manner, but will we know God only out of this old and changing world? - and not only changeable but also corruptible. This is for, by mentioning the new world, He deemed this world as old. And everything that gets old and it oldens, it goes to perdition.

46. But where we have learnt about this world from, and about that life that doesn't get old? Have we learnt that out of contemplating the creatures, or from Him Who was appointed Son of God into power, according to the Ghost of the holiness through the resurrection from dead, from Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 1: 4)? Is it not One our Teacher, Christ (Mt. 23:10)?

⁵⁴⁶ Saint Athanasius, *Against Hellenes* 35-39; G.P. 25: 68-80.

⁵⁴⁷ And today it does that all the more, due to the considerable progress of the sciences, which proved an amazing and a complex rationality existing in the nature.

So, which words of Him we have learnt from, about the nature of the imperishable world? Wasn't Him commanding us not to call ourselves as teachers on earth? How could we, therefore, frequent the Hellenes and the Egyptians in order us to learn something savior from them? Our knowledge about God, it praises God as Teacher; neither angel, nor man, but the Lord Himself taught us and saved us (Isa. 63: 9). We no longer know God out of comparisons (ἐκ τοῦ εἰκότος), and so it is the knowledge of God out of creatures. But now "it has been shown the life that was at the Father and it has been shown to us" (1 Jn. 1: 2); he heralded us that "God is luminous light and there is no darkness into Him" (1 Jn. 1: 5); and they who believed in Him, he made them sons of the light (Eph. 5: 8). "And so, it was shown what we will be"; "for, if He shows Himself we will be like Him; for we will also see Him like He is" (1 Jn. 3: 3). You have again fuel for your gossip: "As He is, so we will see Him". And he who says these, for being him built, in an unmediated manner, on the stone placed in Zion, he is close to that stone in all aspects. "And he who falls on it, he will be broken, and whom it falls on, that one will be crushed" (Mt. 21: 44).

47. But let's study what the philosopher argues like, that there is no sight (ὁρασις) above all the works of the mind. First of all, we are saying that we know the fact that the thing which are speaking about, it is nameless and above-name. So, despite we call it sight, we know that is above-sight. And if somebody wants to call it as understanding (νοησις), if he believes or if he knows, by experience that that is even above-understanding, he will confess just like we do. So, all contrivances and visions, affirmed or negated by that one, we are going to let those aside because of being vain and because of not having any connection with us or with the present "Word". But the fact that there is a sight that is above all understanding (φράσεις ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν νόησις), that one hasn't understood, neither has he believed. But we would forgive him even if he didn't' understand. This would be because understanding what is above-mind, it doesn't stay in the power and in the strivings of ours. And will accept him, leniently, even if he doesn't believe, because we know, according to the apostle "that we must help him who is weak in his faith" (Rom. 14: 1). But his attempt to shake those who believe and to direct against them and against the truth, battle-writings, and his endeavor to offend in all ways, not only the small ones (Mt. 18: 6; Mk. 9: 42; Lk. 17: 2), but even those

whoa re advanced in virtue and piousness, who would be able to endure it silently, once he decided to be a servant to the truth?

So, he didn't understand and he didn't believe that there is a sight and an understanding above any sight and understanding, being above name and receiving names which remain way behind it. He imagines that what the theologians reckon as being above-mind, it is negative theology, and that isn't above-mind. This is because, there are negated – he says – the known realities, but not the unknown realities. But we know too, that in this theology what is negated to God isn't understood by the mind. But neither this theology exceeds the works of the mind.

48. But, about the above-mind sight we couldn't say that. If our mind wasn't able to exceed on itself, there wouldn't be sight and understanding above the works of the mind. And, once the mind has this power, and once the mind is united with God actually only through this power, by crossing this power through God to work, during prayer⁵⁴⁸, one can affirm that there is a sight above all mind's works, a sight that we say about that is above understanding. But one could call that also as non-seeing and nescience in the sense of exceeding.

So, what is more understanding than non-understanding, how could that be a part of the knowledge, by and large?⁵⁴⁹ And how could that be divided according to these species? This is for neither the being has been ever divided by someone amongst wisemen, in: body, incorporeality, and supra-existentiality; neither the feeling, in the five senses and in what is above-feeling. This is because, what is above-being, how could that be under-being, and what is above-being isn't a species of the feeling, neither what is above knowledge could be a species of

⁵⁴⁸ The mind has the power to exceed on itself, but only through God. This is for, through God this power goes out of potentiality and acts. Each person has the power to know another person, but only when that person opens herself / himself this power of knowing passes into deed.

⁵⁴⁹ After he said before that the knowledge received through the godlike light, it can be named also as nescience, as one that exceeds the knowledge, not Saint Gregory is adding here the fact that that sight can be called as non-sight too, in the sense of exceeding the sight, but not in sense of absence of the understanding, or the sight, and of the knowledge. This is for, in that sight are given, in a virtual manner, all the realities brought through creation to our understanding and sight. That's why, that sight cannot be classified under the category of the knowledge, which the knowledge of the creatures is indicated through, by and large; but it cannot be either reckoned as contrary to knowledge, to understanding, or to sight.

the knowledge. And the fact that the mind has the power to exceed on itself, and through this power to unite with the realities which are higher than the mind, it is said by the Great Dionysus, very clearly. And he doesn't only say this, but he also shows this to Christians, as a most-beneficial teaching. "We must, he says, to know that our mind has, on one hand, the power to understand, which our mind sees the intelligible realities through, and on the other hand, the union that exceeds the being of the mind and which the mind connects through to the realities from beyond itself"⁵⁵⁰.

49. But what this one argues like, that there is no sight above all the works of the mind? "This is because, he says, there is nothing higher than the theology by negation". But it is something else, oh, you dear, the sight, and it is something else the theology (the speaking about God), because it isn't the same thing speaking something about God with achieving and seeing God. But the negative theology is word. But the visions are above word and reasoning. This was shown by him who unveiled the untold realities (2 Cor. 12: 4). So, because the theology by negations still is word (and reasoning), the above-word and above-reasoning sight it will be above the negative theology. Therefore, the seers of the realities which are above-word and above-reasoning, they surpass the negative theology too, not by word, but by deed, through truth and through the grace of God and of the Ghost, for the grace can do everything and the grace gives us to see "what the eye hasn't seen and the ear hasn't heard" (1 Cor. 2: 9).

50. But that one, because of not understanding these things, he imagines that Dionysus confesses similarly to what he says, when saying: "Everyone who are found worthy to know and to see God, they reach in the godlike darkness, right through the fact that they won't see and they won't know, because of truly being elevated to what is above-sight and above-knowledge"⁵⁵¹.

In another place Dionysus says: "Only to them is possible to penetrate into the darkness where really is Him Who is beyond all realities, them who have surpassed everything and the clean things and all the peaks of the holy heights and all the

⁵⁵⁰ *About the Godlike Names* 7: 1; G.P. 3: 864 C.

⁵⁵¹ *Epistle V*; G.P. 3: 1073 A.

godlike lights”⁵⁵². “So, if somebody enters this darkness, says the philosopher, he will do it by negating all existing realities. So, the most consummate sight (ἡ τελειοτάτη θεωρία) is this darkness, says the philosopher, of the theology by negation. This is because nothing is beyond of knowing nothing. So, that light that you are speaking about, whatever that would be, you must leave it, in order you to ascent at the theology and sight (θεωρίαν) by negation”⁵⁵³.

But we call as the light of the grace, what the Great Dionysius says too, that “it always surrounds, forever and uninterruptedly, the saints, in that living into the future age, as also it surrounded the disciples at the all-godlike Transfiguration”⁵⁵⁴. Why such a crafty striving to detach ourselves from what will illuminate us eternally, and we will ceaselessly see then, and not only with our senses but with our mind too, or rather above all these, spiritually and in a godlike manner, as we have shown often and in details? What so much craftsmanship and toil for, in order to detach ourselves from Him Who is higher than us, from Him Who unites us, forever, with the realities which are higher than the mind, and Who gives us to see the realities which are above us? This is for, like that mind that is united with the feeling, in an untold manner, it sees the realities which are submitted to the senses, and, like the feeling represents to itself, symbolically and sensitively, the intelligible realities (known with the mind), once reached to perceiving them through its union with the mind, likewise these two (the feeling and the mind), united with the ghost, they will see that light that is spiritually unseen, better said they will cohabit, once deified, eternally, with that light.

⁵⁵² *About the Mystical Theology* 1: 3; G.P. 3: 1000 C.

⁵⁵³ Barlaam doesn’t know anything higher than the negative theology, that leaves the mind in front of a void, and that doesn’t unite the mind with God. The negative theology is a theology which the rationality places through, a precipice between God and rationality, a precipice that neither the negative theology nor God can fill it up. Out of this mentality it is explained the Catholic doctrine about the created character of the grace. The human being remains, even in the state of grace, locked up within the limits of creatureliness. That’s why they do not speak, in the Catholic theology, about the deification of the creature. Not even relatedly to the Mother of the Lord, so much praised in the catholic theology and piety, they do not speak about Her deification. The Mother of the lord remains the peak of the creation, as moral beauty, but She is separated too, from God, through an impossible to be filled up precipice. That’s why the Church, locked up in the order of the creatural, it needs, as tis turn, a locum tenant of Christ.

⁵⁵⁴ *About the Godlike Names* 4; G.P. 3: 576 D.

So, why is there so much crafty striving, that aims to determine us to leave that light that will surround us, eternally, in the age to come, in order us to rejoice with the sight (θεωρία) reckoned by you as all-consummate? And if now can forsake and surpass that light, but then we won't be able to, the present age is higher than the future age, and rightly so, are addicted to the present age, they who wage war against that eternal and true light⁵⁵⁵.

51. But, I wonder, the Great Dionysus co-speaks with them? How could he do that, for Dionysus searched for that light more than everyone? This is for we showed, in details in the words we wrote before, about the godlike light and the godlike illumination, how he who opposes more than everyone to the enemies of the great light, he is the brightest illuminator of the world from Areopagus. But now too, let's analyze again his words referring to that. By writing that, Dorotheos the servant, he says: "The godlike darkness is unapproachable light, for the overwhelming overflowing of above-being light. In that reaches everybody who is found worthy of knowing and of seeing God, right through the fact of not seeing and of not knowing being him elevated in what is above sight and knowledge, by knowing right that which is beyond all realities known with the senses and with the mind (sensitive and intelligible)"⁵⁵⁶.

So, here he is saying about the same thing that is both darkness and light, and there he is saying that he sees and he doesn't see, and there he says that he knows and that he doesn't know. So, how can be darkness that luminous light? "Due to the overwhelming overflowing of light" he says. So, in a proper sense it is light; darkness is in sense of exceeding (καθ' υπερσχῆν), because it cannot be seen by them who attempt to get closer to it and to see it through the works of the mind and of the senses.

52. And because in The Unapproachable One, there reaches anybody who is found worthy of knowing and seeing God, who will be him who will be found worthy of getting close

⁵⁵⁵ If the highest knowledge about God was that of the rational negative theology, and the sight of the godlike light was something inferior to that, then seeing this light in the future age would situate us on a level that would be inferior to the present one, when we are living under the regime of the negative theology – this negative theology being deemed, by Barlaam as the highest.

⁵⁵⁶ *Epistle VI*; G.P. 3: 1073 A.

to The Unapproachable One and to see The Unseen One? Will be so all of them who worship God? But only to Moses and to those like Moses, it was given to reach into the godlike darkness. But the theology by negation, it can be impropriated by each worshipper of God. And now, after the coming of our Lord into body, the theology by negation has become accessible to any human being, as it was shown before. So, this light (in a proper sense) and this godlike darkness (in sense of exceeding), it is something else than the theology by negation is, and it surpasses the theology by negation in an unmatched way; let's say it: as much as Moses surpasses the many, in his seeing of God⁵⁵⁷.

But, he says, he who has reached into this light, he both sees and doesn't see. How comes that: he doesn't see? For he sees, he says, above-seeing. So, in a proper sense, he knows and he sees. He doesn't see in sense of exceeding (*υπεροχίως*), by not seen through any work of the mind and of the senses. BY the fact itself that he doesn't see and he doesn't know, namely by the fact itself that he has exceeded all the knower work, he is elevated in what is above sight and above knowledge. In other words, he sees and he works in a higher way than the human way, as one who has reached to be higher than the man is and he is god by grace and for he is united with God and through God he sees God.

53. So, they who preach only a contemplation (*θεωρίαν*) through negation and beyond that they do not admit any work or sight (*ορασίαν*), and they affirm about this contemplation that it is a part of the general knowledge, and they do not admit any sight higher than the knowledge, on the other hand, they say that those who reach that contemplation through negation - a contemplation reckoned by them as all-consummate - they won't see and they won't know anything in a proper sense, they who affirm that appear rather to admit a lack of knowledge and sight⁵⁵⁸. Consequently, they have forgotten about themselves, by declaring this true nescience in sense of lack (of knowledge),

⁵⁵⁷ The darkness that Moses entered, by being one with that light that is above-all-understanding, it is superior, at its turn, to the darkness of the negative theology.

⁵⁵⁸ They who place the theology by negation on the highest level, they reckon that the highest knowledge is to admit the lack of any knowledge, the knowledge of the absolute void. Thus, by refusing the apophatism of the light, as one that is superior to the negative theology, they actually contest the rational knowledge. Palamas proved, in these rows, that he is a great dialectician.

as higher than all knowledge, and, by taking pride out of the fact that they do not know anything in the sense of lack (of knowledge). Thus, they who do not believe in that greatest light, they also fall off the light of the knowledge⁵⁵⁹.

And, actually, if the sight (θεωρία) by negation and the godlike darkness are one and the same thing, and this sight actually means a lack of seeing, according to them who say that beyond it there is no godlike sight, then this godlike darkness too, it will be an actual darkness, a darkness of the lack that makes crazy them who live into it. And it actually makes like so them who truly argue things like these.

These ones dare to say that they penetrate into that darkness that is above-light, through their negative theology, before they will have rejected their Egyptian mother, a mother that bear a liar name and that is barren, as the fathers say that we must understand the external culture like⁵⁶⁰; before clearly knowing that we live between two rows of adversaries, and that one must make alliance with the best ones; before that, through those ones, they to assault the evil ones and to destroy them, to kill them and to slaughter them, and to set other of them in running (it is about all those evil passions which, by having a familiar connection with us, they dominate us strongly, in the beginning, as some causes, and some together-working presences); before rejecting the bad habit of them who get out of the fountains of the creation the wisdom of God, namely the wisdom of the Hellenes; before dwelling together with them who live in peace with one another and who do not argue different or opposite opinions, namely with the ones who are wise in the spiritual matters; before watching their thoughts through withdrawal and quietude; before climbing the mountain, namely the peak of their soul; before looking from far at the new light; before getting close, before hearing, and before taking off their shoes, given the fact that is not allowed to touch the holy land (Exod. 3: 5), by attaching themselves to dead people and to those who are not real mediators; before changing the right hand in order to make it engolpion (Exod. 4: 6), namely before

⁵⁵⁹ Only that great light that comes to us out of the godlike Person, it has a meaning and it is knowledge, or the so-called light of the knowledge.

⁵⁶⁰ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *About the Life of Moses*; G.P. 44: 329 BC. The whole paragraph that follows, it is influenced by the content of that work of saint Gregory of Nyssa. One cannot reach the sight of the light of God without a purification, as one cannot reach, by speculations, to the formulations of the rational negative theology.

the mind sinks into itself; before totally toppling over the mastery of the tyrant through the staff that can do all things, namely by faith, and before having crossed, by feet, the salty water of the life; before transforming our bitter and harsh nature in a spring of joy above nature, through prayer and through deeds which are pleasant to God; before tasting that food that flows from above and before not running from enemies, but rather wanting to banish all the enemies away; before being consummately prepared for all these things so that they to reach the Sunday of the non-working of evil deeds, and before having they heard and exceeded those trumpets with many sounds, and before they having seen, one by one, other lights with rich overflowing – and these ones are the glory of God heralded through the creatures of many kinds, and then the preaching through prophets, apostles, and fathers, and all the teachings about the godlike realities; before they having accomplished all of these and before having reached together with the leaders who have dedicated themselves to God, on the top of the godlike levels, and then to be united in a non-understood manner, with God Himself, detached from all of these.

But we, by researching the negative theology, as much as we needed that, in the “Words” from before, written by us about light, we have shown that the light is image of that sight (θεωπιας) that is shapeless and fulfilled, which the mind rejoices of, into the Holy Ghost, but it is not itself that light. That’s why, all of them who have been found worthy, through faith, to receive the mystery (of the salvation), they can praise God by negation; but they won’t be united with God and they won’t be able to see God through light, except they receive, by fulfilling the commandments, that above-nature power of the sight⁵⁶¹.

54. “But they who penetrate into the mysterious darkness, they must forsake, according to Dionysus the Areopagite, all the godlike lights” says the philosopher by quoting him. “Therefore, itself the godlike light, if we apply everywhere what you are saying, it must be forsaken too. And

⁵⁶¹ They who simply admit, by faith, the mystery of the salvation into Christ, they can praise God. But they won’t be able to reach at seeing the non-understood light, except by receiving from God the power for perceiving that light. This is because the words for negating any feature of God, those words only express His glory, known out of the mystery of the embodiment and of the salvation. But those words are, though, only an image of the non-understood light of His light, and not itself the lived reality of that light.

this can be ascertained by the fact of no longer seeing anything at all; this is that mysterious darkness”.

What can you say?! Thus, you count up amongst other many things, that light too, a light that is made eternal with the saints, the glory of the godlike nature, the beauty of the future and steadfast age, the without beginning and without end Kingdom of God. This is for, Himself Who shined into that light, on the mountain, he called this light as thus. But what does the godlike Dionysus say? He says in “The Mystical Theology”, clearly: “That one cause of all realities, it is above all realities and it is shown plainly only to them who have crossed through all the holy and clean things”⁵⁶².

If that light is shown to them, and even in an unveiled manner, how comes that it won’t show itself at all? And if this showing is the theology by negation, and by that it is the sole known non-comprising, as you affirm, and this theology is used by Hellenes, as yourself mention that too, then they too have exceeded all the cleanness and itself the godlike light that is the hypostasis of the future goods⁵⁶³. Woe to you! The knowledge of the insane wisemen not only that it comprises, according to you, but it even exceeds the promises of the future goods.

But Dionysus, the speaker about the wisdom of God, he wouldn’t ever say something like that. This is for he mentioned, immediately after, in continuation, the godlike lights, the heavenly sounds, and the peaks of all the saint realities, which one must forsake. Those are the cleanings of Moses before he reached the foot of the Horeb Mountain, the sounds which welcomed him after he climbed above the feet of the mountain, the anticipated sights of the lights, the parting with the many realities. And that sight after all of these, it won’t be the sight of God, but it will be the sight of the place where God sat. This means that all one sees through the work of the senses or of the mind, are some supposed rationalities of the realities which are beneath Him Who is above all realities and through which, not only Himself, but also His presence, are shown as above all

⁵⁶² G.P. 3: 1000 C.

⁵⁶³ If the negative theology is used by some Hellenes philosophers, and through it they do not cogitate except at the non-comprehensibility of God and not at the mystery of the Person or of the supreme Persons as well, but it is superior to seeing the light of the all-loving Trinity of Persons, a light that will wrap the saints in the future life, then the Hellenes who deny the Trinity will have more than the saints, in the future life.

cogitation. Therefore, seeing that place it exceeds the theology by negation too, or it shows this theology itself.

In the last case, if Moses climbed only until he reached that place, one could rightly dogmatize out of these, that there was no sight above the theology by negation. But, due to the fact that Moses detached himself even from the seeing of that place, and for he entered the truly mysterious darkness, by ceasing any knower work, in sense of exceeding, by “uniting himself, on a higher level, with The Unknown One and by seeing Him and by knowing Him, above-mind”⁵⁶⁴, how will they close that sight from the godlike darkness, only within the limits of the theology and of the contemplation (θεωρία) by negation? This is for, Moses looked at it also before he entered that darkness that is above-light (supra-luminous = υπερφωτον γνῶφον), through that place⁵⁶⁵. So, it is obvious that something else is the union and the sight into darkness; that is way higher than such a theology by negation.

55. But why to argue in words, and not show with the deed, the sure truth of what we have said? Moses, by detaching himself from all seen and which are seeing⁵⁶⁶ things and cogitations, and by surpassing the sight of that place, and by entering the darkness, did he saw nothing? But he saw the immaterial tent “which he shown to the people from below, through material imitation”⁵⁶⁷. And this tent, according to the words of the saints, it is the power of Christ, the self-hypostatical power and wisdom, of God⁵⁶⁸, which, by being, by its nature, as immaterial and uncreated, it shown in advance,

⁵⁶⁴ According to Palamas, who reiterates the tradition of the Eastern Fathers, there are three stages of the ascension in knowing God: the knowledge of the godlike rationalities of the creatures, the knowledge of God by negating those realities, and the seeing of God in that darkness that is above-light. The second one, the theology by negation, it is only the place of God. Itself the presence of God is above that. The first and the second stages of knowledge, they have, somehow, a light within them, for they aren't totally non-understood. The third one is a darkness above these lights, but it is, in the same time, a supra-luminous darkness, for, on one hand, it is more non-understood than the first two stages of the knowledge, but on the other hand it is a richer, deeper, more unmediated knowledge of the presence of God.

⁵⁶⁵ Anyway, Moses surpassed the negative theology as well, or the place of God, in order Moses to reach God's supra-luminous presence that is in a supra-luminous darkness.

⁵⁶⁶ But before Moses reached the place of God, or the negative theology, he had to detach himself from all things and from all persons, in order him not to see and not to be seen. This is because even the fact of being seen is disturbing. He also detached himself from the cogitations which he was seeing through.

⁵⁶⁷ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*: G.P. 44: 380 A.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid*, col. 381; 1 Cor. 1: 24.

through the Mosaic tent, that it will receive, at one time, a seen composition, and there will come, in image and being, that Word from above being and imageless, that Tent that is above and before all realities and it comprises all realities; that Tent which were created and which are upheld in, all the seen and unseen realities; that Tent that, by taking body, He will give His body for us; and Who, by being hierarch before ages, he used Himself as a temple, for us⁵⁶⁹. That's why, Moses, reached into the godlike darkness, he not only saw the immaterial tent, which he presented through matter, but he saw itself the godlike spring of the hierarchy and the realities related to hierarchy, which he gave material image, of many kinds, in the priesthood of the Law.

So, the tent and the aspects related to the tent, the priesthood and the aspects related to priesthood, they are sensitive symbols and curtains of Moses's sights, from the godlike darkness. But those sights weren't themselves symbols. "This is for, to them who have crossed through all the holy and all the clean things, and who penetrate the mysterious darkness, those realities will be shown unveiled"⁵⁷⁰. But what could be symbols like, the realities which are shown unveiled of all cover?

That's why, the interpreter of the "mystical theology" says at its beginning: "Above-being Trinity, direct us towards the high peak of the mysterious realities, where are hidden the simple, untied from all, and unchangeable mysteries of the theology, into the above-light darkness"⁵⁷¹. Therefore, who can say, any longer, that in the godlike darkness and beyond the theology by negation, there wouldn't be shown any higher vision? Or, who could tell that all the saints' visions are symbolical? And that, by being symbolical, those visions appear sometimes, but they never exist? But Moses saw the realities he saw, for forty days and nights, according to Gregory of Nyssa:

⁵⁶⁹ God-the Word is the supreme Subject Who comprises in Himself all realities, through thinking and love, which all realities were created through, and which all realities are upheld in, after creation, and which all realities will be fully gathered together in, at the end. And by being comprised in Him, as in a churchly and holy dwelling place, themselves are sanctified. But this Church, by being, in the same time, Subject, He commits that sanctification through His work. As such, Christ is both Church and Hierarch. He is Church and Hierarch by excellence, and from before ages.

⁵⁷⁰ *About the Mystical Theology* 1: 3; G.P. 3: 1001 A.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid* 1; G.P. 3: 997 AB.

“being imparted, under darkness, with the eternal life”⁵⁷². Those visions were shapeless. But, then, what could those vision be like symbolical?⁵⁷³ Then, those realities were seen into darkness. And all the realities from that darkness were “simple, untied of everything, and unchangeable”. But which one amongst the actual symbol, which are divided and sensitive, it isn’t changeable, or composed, or ties to the created things?⁵⁷⁴

56. And because Moses saw those realities, the realities standing before him were seen. So, the seen realities were either seen into light or they were in another light. But all the realities from there were simple. So, all those realities were luminous light. But, because Moses saw those realities after he exceeded on himself and so he reached into darkness, he didn’t see those realities either through senses or with his mind. So, that light is **self-seeing**⁵⁷⁵ and it hides, in the same sense as exceeding, from them who haven’t become eyeless⁵⁷⁶. This is for, what could be seen like, in some way, through the work of the mind, that that itself sees and understands on itself (το αυτοπτικον και αυτονοητο)? But, when the mind has been elevated above all the mental work and when the mind is eyeless, in sense of exceeding, the mind will be filled up with an above-all-beauty shininess, reached into the grace of God, and through that above-mind union having, mysteriously, and seen the light itself that through itself sees on itself. But how? Isn’t the godhead still hidden? - someone could ask. By no means. The godhead

⁵⁷² *About the Life of Moses* 1; G.P. 44: 321 A. Relatedly to Barlaam’s affirmation, that the light seen by saints it has no consistency, but it is a hallucination that now appears and then disappears, Saint Gregory Palamas, on the ground of the writing of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, he shown the consistency of the light also through its duration. This is for, Moses looked at it for forty days and nights.

⁵⁷³ A symbol, in addition to the fact that it is sensitive, it must have a shape too, in order to be able to express an aspect of the godlike or spiritual life. But that life itself, it is without an exterior shape, despite having an internal structure. The various aspects of its internal structure are live concentratedly and intensively, and not in the variety of the external shapes. The godlike light, as spiritual reality, it is shapeless as well. It is lives in intensity as spiritual ambience of the godlike Person, and it is not seen as shape, though in it one feels the structures of the supreme Persons.

⁵⁷⁴ Even the simplicity of the seen godlike light, it shows the fact that the godlike light is lived into intensity, and not in the juxtaposed horizontality or in the changeable succession of the shapes. It is a unitary intensity, but complex, of the godlike Person, or of the godlike Persons united through being.

⁵⁷⁵ Our highlighting. We are not sure about this translation, because the source text can be understood both as *seeing on itself* or as *seeing by itself*. (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁵⁷⁶

doesn't come out of its hiding, but the godhead gives Himself, as a gift, to others too, and so the godhead hides them too, under the godlike darkness⁵⁷⁷. This is for, as it is written, Moses reached alone into that darkness, he was no longer seen (Exod. 24: 18). And what is even more than that, it is that, by elevating him above himself, and by mysteriously detaching him from himself, and by placing him above all the work of the senses and of the mind, God hid Moses from Himself – oh, wonder! – as God did to godlike Paul too⁵⁷⁸. Thus, by seeing, they didn't know, but they asked on themselves: what is that that we see?⁵⁷⁹ And, again, what exceeds any overwhelming of the wondering, it is the fact that in this untold and above-nature showing too, That One remains in hiding. And to them who have been untied and hidden from all realities, He covers not

⁵⁷⁷ One must notice this ingenious answer. As in the whole this development, here too is felt the influence of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, namely of his writing *The Life of Moses*. God doesn't come out of His hiding, because he doesn't rationalize Himself on our level, He doesn't make Himself understood in banal, usual manner. But God elevates the spiritualized person in the exceeding darkness of His full of mystery and heavy of fulness existence. The spiritualized person will know or will understand now the non-understood as such, or what is above the usual understanding. He is in the non-understood or above-understanding darkness of the supra-obvious light. That one now has something within him that makes himself as non-understood by other people, for he is hidden into the darkness of the mystery that exceeds him and that is, in the same time, supra-luminous.

⁵⁷⁸ And he even appears as non-understood to himself too, hidden into the exceeding darkness of the mystery: the supra-luminous darkness. The more the human being reduced himself to the biological processes, the more he appears to himself as more understood, but, in the same time, he won't understand anything of what he actually is. There is a darkness with the perfect pretense of knowledge (that darkness that is reduced to the banal reality) and there is also a darkness of the endlessly rich and complex deeps, a darkness which, just by recognizing it, it offers us an overwhelming light and an endless reserve of advancing into it. The more we really know on ourselves, the more we appear to ourselves as non-understood, as fuller of mystery, as more hidden to ourselves; or, vice versa, the more we appear to ourselves as non-understood, the better we know on ourselves. But these endless deeps of ours, are unveiled to us when we live in the godlike infinite.

⁵⁷⁹ Moses and Paul were to themselves, so hidden into mystery, so non-understood in that sight that they had, so that they didn't know who and what was him who saw or what was the one seen through them. They only realized that weren't they who were seeing, because of what they saw and the power for seeing that, exceeded their power of seeing. But the paradox is that the sight was done through them, so, from this point of view, they enjoyed themselves the benefit of seeing. A stranger subject that was exceeding their subject, he was working within their subject, or that subject gave their subjects power to see. Their subject was framed into a stranger subject, one endlessly superior to them, but who didn't annul the existence of the won subject. This was because they benefited of that sight, as it would have been their own sight, and they were able to wonder about a sight that, not being theirs, it became theirs.

only all the others, but He covers them even to themselves⁵⁸⁰. And the proof for this above-knowledge hiding, it is the desire and the ask and the ascension of Moses to a clearer seeing. But also, a proof for that is the unceasing advancing of the angels and of the saints in the endless age, to ever clearer sights. So, also by seeing, they know that that light is above-seeing. How much more will they know God Who shows Himself through them?

This is for, our eye too, by focusing on the sun's disk, and by seeing it, it knows that is above-seeing.

57. But let nobody stick with this example because it is totally inappropriate. Let the understand only that much, that they who see the godlike light into unveiling, they know the overwhelming hiding not less but a lot more than we who, by attempting to comprised the non-comprised of the godlike nature through symbols, or through their meanings, or through negation, we know that that non-comprised is non-comprised.

This is for, the blind knows too, by hearing and by believing, that the sun's brightness exceeds the measure of the sensitive eyes; but the blind doesn't know that as him who sees⁵⁸¹. And at night, the sun can be seen only, with the mind,

⁵⁸⁰ Although, at that time the cause that produces them that, it remains hidden, they who see that, they realize that it is a Person, that it is the godlike or supreme Person, and that is That One (ἐκεῖνος). That one is also the One Who sees within them, and it is not about an impersonal power. Actually, if there was only an impersonal power that was seeing within them, that impersonal power would become theirs, because of only they being subjects and only a subject can be conscious that he sees. Only by the fact that what sees within them, namely that supreme Person Who can see what they cannot see, for that Person gives them His sight, as a gift, that Person remains, in the same time, Subject of that sight, a Subject that respects other subjects. This is for, a subject, by attracting other subject in the union with him, that subject doesn't annul the other subjects. The subject that gives gifts, by imprinting another subject, he helps that subject too, to understand what gift he was given, or, at least, the love he manifested by giving him that gift.

⁵⁸¹ They who benefit of this sight, they are aware of the fact that what is shown like light and what is seen as such through them who see it, it is a superior person, one that even as person is an inexhaustible spring of light, so, all the more as godlike Person, and they are aware of these aspects due to the fact that they always want to see more of it and to ascend to an increased sight (Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *About the Life of Moses* 2; G.P. 44; 376 D – 377 A). But even in the content of the shown light one can see the spring of that light as being a Person, likewise in the light communicated us by another person we see and we feel that that light belongs to a specific person. Through light, I am placed in relation with the person who communicated me that light. And the person makes obvious to me, through the light that person communicates to me, a more complex and a deeper indefinite than that intuited by me when that person is not present. Likewise, the godlike non-comprised, I living it more

not only by them who have the experience of a healthy sight, but even by anyone amongst them who do not have eyes but they listen to them who can see. And not only that, but he who hasn't eyes, he can know also that the disk of the sun has an above-sight brightness; but the blind to be shared with the sunlight and to have that light, it is impossible⁵⁸².

Likewise, seeing God with the mind and knowing God above-mind, through negation, it can happen to them too who briefly experienced seeing God, as also to them who haven't raised towards Him that above-mind eye of the union, but they listen to them who did that. But the sight of the last ones, it won't be union. And he who doesn't believe them who see through that above-mind union, he can as well reckon God as above-mind, but only above his mental powers⁵⁸³. But, he who has plucked off, from his soul, all the ties to the realities from below, and who untied himself from everything, by keeping the commandments and by the dispassion that come to his out of

complexly, more richly, and more deeply, in that light which it is communicated to me through, than through the void of the negative theology.

⁵⁸² The godlike non-comprised is known also in the moments of theologizing the rational-negative theology, like the sun is seen with the mind even when the sun is absent. The sun is known not only by them who seen the sun before, but also by them who have never seen the sun. But the first ones know, on the ground of the experience of seeing, while the last ones know it by hearing it from other people. So, not only by theologizing simply and rationally. Even this one, it needs faith.

⁵⁸³ Continuing the idea of the quoted saint, Gregory Palamas declares that there is a knowledge about God, with the mind, and that is the knowledge belonging to the affirmative theology of knowing God out of creatures; and there is also an above-mind knowledge, by negating all realities. Finally, there is a third knowledge, that is superior to the first two, and that is a knowledge through union with God. The knowledge by negating all realities, it is reckoned by Saint Gregory Palamas as being also above-mind, for some people benefit of it on the ground of experiencing God, and others benefit of that knowledge for, despite they haven't raise their above-mind-eye to the union with God, they faithfully listen to the first ones. The faith too, it is an eye of that above-mind-sight, though not of a direct sight, but of a mediated sight. As such, by making negative theology, that negative theology isn't limited to a simple rational exercise, neither it stops to the notion of an impersonal pantheistic absolute in Neoplatonic sense, but that negative theology believes in that God-Person expresses through negation. Actually, one can believe only to a God-Person. Only that faith in a God-Person, it is actually a faith. The faith is an interpersonal act. The faith is and act of trust, it is a moral act, it is an act of love. He who believe into a person, he is in a personal relation with that person. Our faith comes out of a work of a person upon us. The faith sees the Person of God for the faith is helped by an above-mind power, a power that comes from God-Person. Saint Gregory Palamas threw a bridge between seeing and living God, and the rational negative theology, so that Palamas Christianized the rational negative theology, namely helping the rational negative theology to know God not as an impersonal non-comprised, but as a Person-non-comprised.

doing so, and who, then, he has been elevated above any knower work, through the perseverant, clean, and immaterial prayer, and there, through an unknown union – in sense of exceeding – he is veiled up in an unapproachable shininess, only him, for he has become luminous light and for he has been deified through light, and by seeing light, he knows in this sight and in this impartation with light, also what is above-light and non-understood out of God. he reckons God not only as above the human mind's power of understanding – because there are, above-mind, also many among the created realities – but even above the all-supra-natural sight, the only one that unites the mind with the realities which are beyond the aspects of the intelligible realities “in a godlike and above-heavens union of the minds”⁵⁸⁴.

58. But there have been enough things said about these. By resuming the aspects which we have been treating, we say that if somebody wants to call this sight as above-seeing (την υπερ θεων ορασιν), that understanding above all the sight of the mind, he won't differ at all from us⁵⁸⁵. But this philosopher, by reckoning that we call these things only as “sight”, and not also as a “non-understood-understanding”, he got furious because of the name “sight” and, by remaining to these words, he committed many sins against the prophetic grace. But we, by briefly unveiling three of four of these sins, we are going to let the other sins aside. So, this philosopher, by striving himself argue that the sight is below understanding, he says: “All the sights shown by prophets are a lot lower than the understanding, because of being contrived, described, and imagines by imagination”.

⁵⁸⁴ Dionysius the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Names* 1: 4; G.P. 3: 592 C. God is seen by him who is clean of passions, not only as The One Who is above mind's power, because of being there also some creatures which are above the power of the human mind – for instance, the angels –, but as One Who is even above that union itself, a union which the mind is united with the realities which are above those realities which can be understood by the human mind. But God is above in His quality as Subject and spring of His manifestation and, as such, he still is present within them.

⁵⁸⁵ Saint Gregory Palamas admits this above-sight-seeing to be called as understanding. But it is an understanding that is above the work of the mind, and therefore it is a non-understood-understanding and an above-understanding understanding. The difference between such an understanding and such a sight it is very fluid on spiritual plan. The understood reality is so intensely lived, that it is like a reality perceived through a feeling, similar to a spiritually touched, to a spiritually seen, and to a spiritually heard reality. There is being accomplished a contact between our spirit and that reality.

The fact that most of the prophets saw the most visions while they were elevated into the state of ecstasy (of getting out of themselves), it is not doubted by anyone who listen to the prophets' words. But what are we going to say? Were the prophets seeing God, while they were experiencing an ecstasy towards the worst things? But God Himself says that He showed Himself to Moses "in image and not through riddles" (Num. 12: 8)⁵⁸⁶. Did Mose experience the ecstasy towards the evil thing, even then? But what Moses saw and heard while he remained in ecstasy for forty days and while he was imparted with that imageless life under darkness (Exod. 24: 18)? Did he experienced the going out of himself towards the evil things? He who writes such things, he will have totally gone out of truth.

59. But the philosopher commits here a twofold sin. This is because he lies to us, by arguing that the Great Dionysus cogitates here too, as the philosopher does, and so Dionysus declares all the prophetic visions as inferior to understanding, by quoting from Dionysus's writings the words: "God is named form other godlike imaginings (από των θείων φαντασμάτων), which illuminates the initiated ones or the prophets, according to other and other causes and powers"⁵⁸⁷. But this one says here too, limpidly, that God showed Himself "according to other causes and powers". God, as Himself says, "He showed Himself to somebody in his dream, to another in state of watchfulness, namely through riddles; and to Moses in image and not through riddle". Then, how the prophets saw only through the soul's imaginative power?

But, also the godlike imagination (φαντασία) ois very different form our human imagination. This is for, the godlike imagination truly imprints our really cogitating and incorporeal side. The human imagination, though, it unfolds in our soul's side that is close to our body⁵⁸⁸. What receives there the

⁵⁸⁶ God shows Himself to Moses "in image and not through riddles", in the sense that God Himself talked to Moses "mouth to mouth" and Moses "saw His glory" (Num. 12: 8). But this means a going out of Moses, from himself, towards the higher realities. Moses is so much kidnapped by the greatness of the Person of God, so that Moses no longer thinks at himself, or he forgets about himself, namely he "goes out of himself". It is what happens, actually, but on a smaller degree, when somebody is kidnapped by the wonderful charm of a human interlocutor.

⁵⁸⁷ *About the Godlike Names* 1: 2; G.P. 3: 597 A.

⁵⁸⁸ The godlike imagination has a spiritual character, but it also has a structure and endless possibilities to imprint one or another of God's structures or intentions into the human imagination, for the human imaginations contains in itself, at its turn, indefinite structures and

imprinting, it is the highest part of the rational soul; while, over here, it is almost the last part of the souly powers. This one is imprinted in the movements of the senses; here, if you want to find out who produces the imprinting into the cogitating power of the prophets, you listen to the Great Basil who says: "The prophets saw by the fact that the Ghost was imprinting Himself in the leading part of theirs"⁵⁸⁹. So, the Holy Ghost is The One Who placed Himself within the prophets' mind and, by using their understanding as a material matter, He foretells in it, through Himself, the future, first to the prophets and, through them, to us too⁵⁹⁰.

So, how could be this work of the Ghost simply an imagination of the same kind and of the same honor with our imagination? And how could be this imagination below our understanding? Better said, how isn't shown out of this too, that that is a light seen by the mind and that that is something else than the understanding; and that is about visions which aren't either sensitive or imagined, but they are totally different from the knowledge out of cogitation?

60. But the philosopher brings also another word belonging to the same one (Dionysus), that says: "The angels who shaped the sight, in order to introduce the speaker-about-God in the godlike realities". "And here, he says (Barlaam), by saying: he shaped (*διαπλάσας*), he showed that is about

intentional possibilities, which can be imprinted on the face of the man, in his eyes, in his words, in his mimic, and in his stances, in diverse ways.

⁵⁸⁹ At Prophet Isaih; G.P. 30: 124 B.

⁵⁹⁰ The Ghost imprints Himself into the mind of the prophets as One Who know the future, and for He wants to herald something about that future. So, the Ghost Himself heralds a certain thing through the prophets' mind, firstly to them, and then, through them, to others too. The Holy Ghost imprints Himself, as Subject, into the prophet's subject, with one of His intentions, and by that the Ghost takes the "shape" of the mind, of the mind is configured in its understanding, according to what the Holy Ghost communicated to the mind. The mind will us the imagination in order the mind to understand and to transmit what the Ghost communicates to the mind. This is for, the imagination gives shape to the realities which are above-shapes. But the Ghost Himself helps the mind in this adaptation of the imagination to what the Ghost communicated to the mind. So, there is a (virtual) imagination, or a power that leads the human imagination towards understanding and transmitting the things communicated by the Holy Ghost and into the Holy Ghost. The godlike virtual imagination works upon the human imagination. The last one is imprinted by the first one. They are no longer separated, but the first one takes place and it is actualized in the last one, and it shown itself as imprinted in the last one. The idea and the expression of imprinting are used by Saint Maximos the Confessor when speaking about the imprinting of the godlike will of Christ into His human will (*Opusc. Theol.*; G.P. 91: 80 D).

imagination. This is because, nothing among the things which are contemplated by the mind, it doesn't get shaped through itself".

So, if somebody agrees this philosopher, that somebody will suspect that also the heavenly Principalities and Powers, they experience an ecstasy inferior to the understanding (a going out towards the realities which are below understanding), and that their sights are bodily and products – oh, wonder! – of the imagination. And not only their sights, but themselves their hypostases and their substantial existences, will be resemblant to imagination. This is because, the same saint says in the eight chapter of the "Heavenly Hierarchy", by extolling the names which the holy Principalities are expressed: "Their lordship is full of the longing for the true origin of their lordship and they shape themselves and they shape the realities from after them, with kindness, towards a similar lordship"⁵⁹¹. If, therefore, among the things which the mind sees through itself, nothing was shaped and all the shapes ones are products of the imagination or sensitive things, and, consequently, they are way below the things we cogitate, then, likening the Principalities and the Power to God it won't be done on the plan of the understanding, but it will be bodily and imagined and below the human understanding, as one that is contrived. And if their likeness to God is such, how could they be intelligible (spiritual) according to their nature?

61. But the philosopher deduces the same thing, also out of another word of the same saint: "When you hear about the angel that imprints (shapes = *τυποῦντος*) the sight, by conveying to the speaker-about-God, according to his power, his holy knowledge", "how could not be the imprinted sight, he says, something imagined (contrived)?".

But we are going to topple him over, again, with the help of the "Heavenly Hierarchy". "The holy groups of the heavenly beings, he says, by shaping on themselves in an intelligible manner (spiritually), towards imitating God, and by wanting to shape their cogitating image towards resembling to the godlike origin, there are imparted, rightly so, with a richer godlike communion"⁵⁹². Can you see that there are also intelligible imprintings (*τυπος νοητούς*)? How, then, on the ground of these

⁵⁹¹ *The Heavenly Hierarchy* 8: 1; G.P. 3: 237 C.

⁵⁹² *The Heavenly Hierarchy* 4: 2; G.P. 3: 180 A.

names, could you reckon that the prophets experience the inferior ecstasy (the going out of themselves towards the evil or the lower things)? This is because, from these expressions, I cannot reach to reckon the visions of the prophets as below the human cogitation, but rather as above our minds and I learn to know the fact that these visions of theirs are similar to those of the angels⁵⁹³. This is for, the prophets, due to their cleanness, they became fit for the union with the angels, and, by tending towards godhead the prophets were united with the angels, the prophets were shaped and imprinted by angels, as the angels too are shaped and imprinted by the more advanced angels, and so they change their spiritual image towards a countenance of godlike shape. And through this shaping, they deepen and cultivate to themselves, as a good belonging to them, the holy knowledge descended from there. And what will be so odd, if the prophetic cleanness is shaped by imprintings alike those of the angels? This is for, by being together-servants with the angels in speaking about God, the prophetic cleanness is recognized that it can receive in itself the imprinting of God⁵⁹⁴.

⁵⁹³ Barlaam reckoned that any shaping or imprinting is done on a sensitive material. He didn't admit that there can take place also an imprinting of something godlike, into understanding; what is imprinted it will preserve the godlike character, and what receives the imprinting or the shaping, it will preserve the human character. From here, Barlaam deduced that everything that is imprinted into mind, that will lower the mind on an inferior level. So, itself what is imprinted it would have an inferior character, if it is not even a contrivance of the mind, one close to the bodily shapes. Saint Gregory Palamas shows, a contrary, that there is also an imprinting of an intelligible and even godlike reality, into the human mind or understanding, one that doesn't lower the mind to sensitive sights. The mind is shaped or it is imprinted by the godlike realities in a spiritual manner, as for instance by the superior understanding, by the clean joy, by the love for every good thing etc. This is for, even the angels, who are totally understanding beings, or incorporeal, they are shaped or they are imprinted by the godlike goods, and they live those goods within them, and they become like those goods, or according to their godlike model.

⁵⁹⁴ By serving God as the angels do, the prophet can receive as well, themselves the imprintings from God (τοὺς τοῦ θεοῦ τύπος). The imprinting from God, like that produced by angels, it is shown not in a material contrivance introduced in the prophets' mind, but it is shown in the urge to serve God, like the angels have it. The appeal of the superior Person of God, it produces into the human mind, as answer, the will to serve. Of course, that, in its showing, this urge to serve externally through the body, it passes from the character of a spiritual imprinting to a material form. But in mind, or in understanding, or into soul, it doesn't take such a form, but it is manifested in certain spiritual states and tendencies of the soul. These states and tendencies have also a general character of "type" or "model" for other people. For instance: the humble, gentle behavior, it represents a 'type' that can be imitated

“This is for, the clean heart, he says, it is that that it presents its mind to God, shapeless (απειδεον) and prepared for being imprinted with the imprintings (models) of God, which God usually shows Himself through”⁵⁹⁵.

62. Zachariah of Barachias, he taught that even the ghost from within us is shaped (πράττεσθαι) by God, showing either the bringing anew of the ghost, from what doesn't exist, to existence, by God, or the reshaping and transforming of the ghost towards the good existence⁵⁹⁶. “The breath of the word of the Lord over Israel, says the Lord, He Who stretches the sky and founded the earth and contrived the ghost of the man into him” (Zachariah 12: 1). So, what are we going to say: will there be body also the ghost from within us, because of being shaped (contrived) when it is brought to existence, or transformed?

And He Who shapes, being begged, He is good to them who desire Him.

And he who tells us that he was shaped when still being a child, as friend, by the great pedagogue of the Pont (Basile the Great?) “With that good and all-clean shaping”, does he praise

by others. Thus, any man has, on one hand, a strictly personal character, and on the other hand, if some dominant traits have been intensified in him, he becomes a ‘type’ to others.

⁵⁹⁵ Τοις ενσημαίνεσθαι τύποις, δτων εμφανης πεφυκε γίνεσθαι. This text is taken from Mark the Hermit, *Heads about Watchfulness* 24; G.P. 65: 1064 B. See also Saint Maximos the Confessor, *Gnostic Heads* 2: 82; G.P. 90: 1164 A; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume II, p. 199. For God Himself makes Himself shown through certain imprintings imprinted to the soul, these imprintings exist virtually in God too, as intentions to develop, in good, the human and angelic subjects, according to their models from within God (logoi). God has these “types” within Himself, through His features of: kindness, holiness, righteousness etc. These types are imprinted within people, who take God as their model, or who are imprinted by God’s “types” in a way or another, and that makes their “rationalities”, which are children of the godlike rationalities, to be developed on the line of these models. This is for, the rationalities of the human persons, as long as they exist only in the thinking of God, they still are influenced by the “mode” which God live in, in eternity. When they take a concrete existence, God behaves towards them as he behaves, from eternity, towards their shapes as thought into God, according to His living into Himself. And even themselves the rationalities of the things and of the persons into God, they are some kinds of virtual shapes which God can imprint as Person-model, actualizing them, within the persons who open themselves to God, and who strive themselves to live according to the virtual models, and by that, those persons become, as their turn, “types” to other persons. But through these “types”, God Himself makes Himself known, in a benevolent descent towards people.

⁵⁹⁶ Saint Maximos the Confessor said that, after God brought us to existence (το ειναι), God leads us, with our collaboration, to the good existence (το ευ ειναι) (*Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1073). Saint Gregory Palamas adds that that is being done through the contrivance and shaping of our personal ghost.

and reckon as worthy to the desired the art of shaping the body?⁵⁹⁷

But how would come God to all our things, in order Him to shape our hearts, individually, as the godlike David says (Ps. 32: 15⁵⁹⁸), if we didn't understand through the shape heart the inside man? And Moses, by spending forty days and nights under darkness, in that shapeless life, didn't he see shapes (godlike imprintings)? "You will make all of them, He says, according to the shape (κατα τον τύπον) shown to you in the mountain" (Exod. 25: 40)⁵⁹⁹. So, what are we going to say? Moses, reached into the godlike darkness, he went off himself, and he went towards the inferior realities, and he was seeing through phantasy, because it was written that he saw a shape (τυπον)?

63. But the philosopher, because he doesn't admit any difference between the intelligible and godlike (νοητών και θείων τύπων) shapes (the imprintings), when he hears that the speaker-about-God perceived the realities he saw, as diverse, and that he was imparted with the sight shaped by angels, and that he was elevated at the understanding knowledge of the existing realities or of the seen realities, he deduced from here that "the knowledge is superior to sight (κρείττον γνώσις θεωρίας), because, from this one, the prophet was elevated to knowledge, and not lowered".

So, one could say that all of them who explain to us, through the unfolding of the meaning of the godlike words, they elevate us from the inferior realities towards the superior realities. So, the Lord, by giving us the Gospel on earth, as a shortened word, he would have given us something inferior. And they who interpret the Gospel, they go out of Gospel and

⁵⁹⁷ Saint Gregory the Theologian, *Word no. 43*, at Basil 42; G.P. 36: 509 B.

⁵⁹⁸ In KJB we have: Ps. 33: 15: "He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works."; in ROB we have: Ps. 32: 15: "He Who built their hearts, individually, He Who understands all their things". (E. I. t.'s n.)

⁵⁹⁹ By living into a shapeless living, Moses "saw godlike imprintings" (θείους τυπούς), of course, in this life of his. This is because, such forms cannot be seen in themselves. So, by receiving such imprintings, the life of Moses didn't receive material shapes. The life without shapes adapts to the godlike imprintings into it. Although into the mind it is imprinted the shape (the imprinting) of the tent, according to which Mose made the seen tent, the mind still doesn't take and it still doesn't receive in itself a material shape. But the "shape" of the tent comes from God, namely it exists in God, but in God too it has, and even way more so, an immaterial character. This is for, the shape of this tent is Himself the Hypostasis of the Word Who comprises all realities within Himself.

they elevate us to its understanding as to something superior? Woe, what insanity! Because, they who interpret, they do not get far from the godlike words. But, by talking out of those words, the knowledge, as out of some springs of the knowledge, and as out of a fountain of the eternal light, they give that to us too, and they elevate us from the nescience that we are in, to knowledge, as to something superior. In such cases, the explanations show sometimes the movement, and some other times the cause.

When, therefore, the Holy Scripture says that the prophet received teaching “by sight” (ἐκ τῆς θεωρίας), and that the angels elevated him from sight to teaching, it doesn’t say that the angels took him away from sight; but it says that the prophet learnt from that sight the things we didn’t know before, as out of a cause of the knowledge and for the angel understood better the aspects comprised in that sight, for he was an angel, he explained that sight to the prophet and so the angels elevated the prophet from nescience to science. So, the nescience which he was removed from, it is inferior in comparison to the knowledge which he was elevated to. But the sight that gives us the knowledge, a sight that he has in himself, in a concentrated manner, according to the likeness to God, how could not that be higher than the knowledge provided by it?⁶⁰⁰

It was necessary, though, that him who started against our fathers, not to leave either the prophets without being despised. For they are the first fathers and fathers of the fathers into Ghost. So, it was necessary those too to be partakers to the insult brought to these ones.

⁶⁰⁰ Out of the fact that the sight needs to be interpreted, Barlaam deduced that the interpretation means the elevation to knowledge as to a superior level of the one who sees. So, the sight would be inferior to understanding. Saint Gregory Palamas affirms that the sight isn’t inferior to knowledge, for it comprises the knowledge within itself. Explaining something, it doesn’t lead to something that isn’t sight, but it unfolds what is in it in a concentrated manner. The sight has, as unmediated content, the reality. The explanation can get far from reality. He who sees, he has in his sight the reality known in an unmediated and concentrated manner, he has the conscience of the reality according to the likeness to God Who knows all realities in an unmediated and concentrated manner. That’s why, the best explanation is provided by him who has the sight, or by the angels who has too the same sight and for he is on a higher level of understanding it. This is for, the sight has a depth of meanings that can never be exhausted, because of being itself the luminous manifestation of the Person of God in His intentions of making the creature eternal into the infiniteness of His life and love.

64. But, because of having enough with the fight against the fathers and the prophets, he who has taken, as pretext, them who embraced the appeasement, in order, to say so, him to rush against all the godlike things, he then pretends to be himself the chief interpreter of the most mysterious words of the Gospel, and he claims that he can teach what they who are clean in heart see God like, and what the Son comes together with the Father and make their dwelling within them like (Jn. 14: 23). "So, they who are clean in their heart, he says, they do not see God otherwise except by analogy (by resemblance), or according to the cause, or by negation. And he is more seer of God, he who knows more out of the world's parts, of he who know the higher ones. And even more so, he who know that he rather doesn't know. And the most seer of God of all seers, is him who knows the seen parts and the unseen powers of the world: the attraction of the elements towards earth and all the others, and the rejections of all of these among them, the differences, the features, the touches, the connections, the harmonies, and, shortly, all the told and untold syntheses of this whole. This is for, he who can better contemplate all of these, he can know God through analogy, as Cause of all of these. And by placing God above all of these, by negation, he again knows God as above all realities. This is because, he says, one knows God only out of things. Not out of what somebody doesn't know, but only out of what somebody knows, he knows God. So, the more somebody know more numerous and more important parts of the created world, and more exactly, the more he will differ from other in knowing God. And itself the mode of the knowledge of God by negation, that seems to despise the knowledge of the thing in favor of God, it cannot take place without knowing all the things. This is because, we cannot know except the negation of the things whose existence we know about"⁶⁰¹.

65. Woe him, for he blames himself! These things aren't at all contrary to his opinions from other places. This is because, on the other hand, he defines as consummate man, him who know everything. If, therefore, as he has declared also now, we can know only the negations of those ones and we can

⁶⁰¹ We have here the whole scholastic doctrine about the knowledge of God, one that penetrated also the textbooks of the Orthodox Dogmatics, starting with the XV century and all the way up almost to our time.

refer to God only the negations of those ones, whose understanding we have, God will be compelled – oh, what insanity! – to be The One known out of the negation of all realities. And then, either somebody know all the existing realities, so that out of the negation of all realities he to know God, and that one gives himself to us as another god – for only God know everything – or, if he doesn't know something, he will reckon that that something would be God. This is because, what he doesn't know, he cannot deny that to God, as himself says⁶⁰². And again, if somebody only out of the things he knows, he knows God in His quality as their Cause, for all the things escaping his knowledge he won't reckon God as their Cause⁶⁰³. Therefore, he will measure the godlike power according to what exists in the world. This is because, he doesn't know more that there is in the world⁶⁰⁴.

But we, by being elevated beyond knowledge, we have been entrusted that it is as easy as possible, to God to bring to existence tens of thousands of worlds, and not only similar⁶⁰⁵ to one another, but even differing from each other. And out of all of these together, we know God, through affirmation and

⁶⁰² If, according to the rational negative theology, only out of the negation of all realities which we understand, we can know God, we will be compelled either to understand all realities in order us to know God by negating those realities – and this is impossible to the human being –, or what we do not understand, that will be God, for that represents top us, through itself, the negation. Out of both sides of the alternative, it comes out an incomplete knowledge about God, and not a complete one as the negative theology claimed, by reckoning that it doesn't need another knowledge of God superior to the negative theology. The knowledge is here being conceived in a quantitatively, and not spiritually.

⁶⁰³ Neither the affirmative theology can know God completely. This is because, according to the affirmative theology, God is known only in His quality of Cause of the known things. Anyway, the affirmative theology doesn't offer us a knowledge of God except of the ground of the realities from the world. This is because, only the realities from the world are known, or knowable, through the rational powers of ours. And neither they can be fully known. So, neither the affirmative theology can claim that there isn't a superior knowledge about God. Thus, neither the knowledge provided by the negative theology, not the knowledge provided by the affirmative theology, namely no kind of rational knowledge, it can express a knowledge of God that doesn't required to the completed by a knowledge superior to it. This is the knowledge out of revelation, one that implies also the knowledge by sight, or by experience.

⁶⁰⁴ The affirmation that God can be known only through the things from the world, it means a disrespectful narrowing of God, one neighboring the pantheism.

⁶⁰⁵ To really known God, it means to known that in Him there are possibilities for countless other worlds. To see God into light it means understanding that in Him there are countless meanings superior to those shown us by the world. Any human person could make other and other countless things, all the more can the Supreme Person do that.

negation. Even out of the things which we do not know, we know God's endlessly powerful power. So says Paul: "Christ has ascended above all names, not only of the realities which are named, namely of the realities known in the present age, but also of the realities which will be known in the future age" (Eph. 2: 20-22). So, also out of the realities which were unknown to him, Paul praises the greatness of God. Likewise, in another place of his Epistles, he asks: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?" and by mentioning all the sensitive and intelligible realities, the ones from now and the ones to come, he adds: "No even another creation will be able to separate us from the love of Christ" (Rom. 8: 35-39). So, he passes with his sight from the inexistent things, and he speaks about them as they would exist. And if out of one, we can know tens of thousands, and if we can now out of what is limited, the limitless power, how won't be us able to know out of the few things we know about God, wholly, as we say that we know the lion by seeing his claws on a corner of the sofa? How could we not know God thus, as the Maker of all realities, and how could we not discern Him, by negation, from all realities, and how could we not add Him, by faith, to what exceeds the knowledge about God out of things?... for, out of the inexistent things, all the existent things have been created only with the word⁶⁰⁶.

⁶⁰⁶ So, one doesn't need to know everything in order to know God by affirmation, as Cause of all realities, and by negation, as differing from all realities. Only Barlaam as philosopher, he pretended that he needs to know everything in order to know God by affirmation and negation. The contemplation of God as The One Who is more than Cause of all realities and contrary to all realities, it is brought by the faith. This is for the faith is a mysterious relation with God, from the initiative of God and through the openness of the man. And this experience of God, one that is born out of some kind of sight, out of some kind of unmediated "light" of God, it sees God as Person, and that Person Who was able to created the existing world, He is lived, in His freedom, as One Who could created other countless worlds too. We, as people, we do not feel ourselves strong except in the relation with another person, or with other persons. This is for, we find in them a support and a strengthening of our existence as we cannot find in things. All the more we find this support and this strengthening in the Supreme Person. Through faith, the human being feels that all the things depend, in an absolute manner, on the Supreme Person, for all of them could be brought to existence only by the word of that Person. Only another person makes the existing things to fill up a void. Only the Supreme Person could make the things coming to existing from a void, from nothing, and to be upheld in order they not to become again a void. Itself the fact that we cannot enter and remain in relation with God except by faith, it shows us that He is Person. Or, the possibility of our faith consists of the fact that God is Person. This is for, the faith is the way which we enter through and which we remain in relation with the person as person, and, therefore, all the more with God as Person.

66. This above-knowledge knowledge, it is common to all of them who believe into Christ. But the end of the true faith, one that comes only out of the working of the commandments, it doesn't provide us only the knowledge about God out of the existing realities, known and unknown (here we are understanding by "the existing ones", of course, the created realities), but out of the uncreated light that is the glory of God and of Christ God and "of them who have reached the ultimate target of the image of Christ"⁶⁰⁷. This is for, Christ will come into the glory of the Father, and "The righteous will shine in the glory of their Father, Christ, as the sun" (Mt. 13: 43), and they will be luminous light and they will see light, that is the wonderful and all-holy sight of the cleaned heart. It is shown so, with measure, and as an earnest, their too who have crossed, by dispassion, through all the holy realities and, by clean and immaterial prayer, they have crossed through all the clean realities. And then God will deify, manifestly, "the sons of the resurrection" (Lk. 20: 360, who will eternally be with Him and who will be glorified together with Him Who gives to our nature, as a gift, godlike glory and brightness. But the glory and the brightness are not had either by the created realities, as quality of the being of God. How could somebody reckon, then, the glory of God as being of God? This is because, by being God unimpartable, unseen, and untouchable, He makes Himself impartable, comprised, and shown, and one Ghost with them who pray to Him with a clean heart, through an above-being power, in time of prayer a sight, according to all-mysterious and untold prayer towards our common Father, for us: "Give them, He says, as I am into You and You into Me, they too to be into Us, one in truth" (Jn. 10: 21)⁶⁰⁸.

⁶⁰⁷ Dionysus the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Names* 1: 4; G.P. 3: 592 B. The knowledge about God it doesn't come only out of knowing the created things, by affirming and by negating the features of God, but especially out of the light that irradiates out of Him as Person, especially out of Christ Who has come, as Person-God, close to us, and out of them who have reached the consummation of the image of Person-Christ within them. And one reaches this state not through rational knowledge, but through the faith into Christ, as personal relation with Christ, and by strengthening this relation by fulfilling the commandments, namely by fulfilling the will of Christ Who wants a closeness between us and Him, by harmonizing our will to His will.

⁶⁰⁸ God imparts Himself to us, during our clean prayer, for in the clean prayer we open ourselves, exclusively, to Him, in the most intense manner. Then it shines to us the light of His Person, in a sight, and He shares Himself to us "through an above-being power". This is for, what we are imparted with, it is not the godlike being, but it still is above any (created)

Of this kind it is, therefore, the seeing of God, that only they who have been found worthy of the blessed end, they will see it in the endless age, but it was seen here too, on Tabor, by the chiefs of the apostles, and by Stephen, when he was stoned to death, and by Anthony, who was striving to appease himself, better said by all the saints, namely by all of them who were clean in heart, as he who wants can find out of their written words, or out of their lives. And I would even say that neither the prophets nor the patriarchs didn't remain without tasting out that light; better said, except by a few, all their visions, and especially the all-godlike visions didn't lack this light. This is because, otherwise, why would want to show Himself in a stranger light, He Who has His own eternal light, on behalf of the clean in heart ones, by showing Himself in a mysterious way, but still seen, as says also the Great Dionysus. Being the sight of God so, how wouldn't be this eternal light promised by Him Who blesses them who are clean in heart, but He would promise them, instead, the knowledge out of creatures, a knowledge that can be achieved by the wisemen of this time?

67. And the fact that the philosopher reckons the knowledge obtained out of creatures as the most consummate sight, he previously showed that to us, by saying: "No one will miss anything out of the overwhelming greatness of that, if he has known the seen parts of the world and the unseen powers".

But to deduce, by analogy (by comparison), from the work to the Creator, and from the good composition of the world to the above-wisdom World, that can be done by the wisemen of this time too, says Saint Gregory of Nyssa. And I would say that even the unwise and the non-believers (into Christ) can do that, as we see all the barbarians knowing a God Maker of all realities. This One must be known, necessarily, also by the theology by negation, once the Maker of all realities isn't anything of the created realities. Do not have, also many amongst heretics and pagans the wisdom of the present time and the understanding about God that comes out of that wisdom? But are they blessed by the Lord? What can we say

being, or above what "is", meaning, by "what is", everything that has been created. This impartation takes place into "sight". This is for, "[into sight]", he who sees, he encounters, in an unmediated manner, and he is imparted with The Seen One. From The Seen One come rays into him who sees, and through those rays comes Himself as Person.

about those among Hellenes who distinguished themselves in philosophy way more than the Christians from now, and they formed they philosophical thinking on the ground of the knowledge out of creatures? Did they achieve, by that, also the blessed and eternal reward, And, nonetheless, even more than everyone, and eve more than they who didn't know anything else except they knew our Lord Jesus Christ? How wouldn't they have achieved it way much more, if God had been known out of creatures? How wouldn't have they been seers of God, more than others, due to the fact of achieving more knowledge out of creatures? But all of us know the Son, out of the parental voice that taught us from above; and Himself the Holy Ghost and itself the untold light showed us The One out of the Father, and Who was confessed as "beloved". And Himself the Son unveiled us the name of His Father and, by ascending to heavens, he promised to send us the Ghost, in order Him to remain with us forever. And Himself the Holy Ghost, by coming and by remaining with us, He heralded us and He taught us the whole truth. So, how can we know God only out of creatures, and not out of what we do not know, but out of those ones which we know?⁶⁰⁹ I wonder, if one doesn't experience the wedding, won't he know the connection of God with the Church, because he cannot make the analogy (the comparison) with the wedding? So, will you advise all people to run away from virginity, in order they to find out the knowledge about God? But you will be shamed by Paul who, by not being married, he

⁶⁰⁹ Without contesting the deductive knowledge about God, out of creatures as works of God, Saint Gregory Palamas, by following the example of Saint Gregory of Nyssa (*At Blessings* 6; G.P. 44: 1269 B), he affirms that this knowledge isn't the highest knowledge about God. This is because, this knowledge can be had by philosophers too, and they can know even more than all the simple believers. But there is a higher knowledge. It is the unmediated knowledge about God out of experiencing His presence in works. Even the knowledge by faith, for it accepts the experience had by others, it is superior to the deductive knowledge. Besides, in itself the faith there works God. The knowledge by own experience, it is had by them who have cleaned their heart, namely who widely and exclusively have opened their being to this presence of God. To some people like these, God made Himself known also by the above-nature Revelation. In the experience of the presence of God it is given, in an unmediated manner, the Person of Christ, or of the Person of the Holy trinity Who unveil One Another through their maximum love, without our heart. This knowledge is superior to the deductive knowledge out of things, for into Person there is given all, are given His endless richness and life, Whom the possibilities of the things are in too. With that Person we are imparted, on the moment of the encounter, in a way like with a living, whole, unlimited unity, and in another way, that Person remains in His unimpartable infiniteness, or as a spring of continual and ever-increased impartation.

was the first to tell that this mystery is great “but in connection to Christ and Church” (Eph. 5: 32)⁶¹⁰.

68. But here comes the time to mention that godlike voice that said: “We thank You, Father, Lord of the heaven and of the earth” for, by uniting Yourself with us and by unveiling Yourself to us through Yourself, “You hid that to the wise and to the skilled” (Lk. 10: 21; Mt. 11: 25). Skilled are they who are self-taught and in front of them. That’s why, by hearing your saints speaking, they disregard some of them, and they misinterpret the saying of other of them; and they even dare to falsify some of their words, attempting to deceive everyone. For instance, Gregory of Nyssa, when explaining what is the sight (θεορία) of God unveiled to them who are clean in their heart, after he says that ‘also the wisemen of the present time can know God out of the good composition of the world’, he adds: “but it seems to me that the greatness of the Blessing says something else”⁶¹¹. Starting from here, the fathers uphold something that doesn’t match the thinking of the philosopher. And the Great Dionysus the Areopagite, being preoccupied with the way which we know God in, once God isn’t either intelligible or sensitive, and by answering through the question: “isn’t that right one to say that, doubtlessly, not out of His being, but out of the order of the things we know God?”, and then he unveils us also the all-godlike knowledge, that is, by union, above-nature, with that light that is above-shininess and above-knowledge, these ones let aside the above-mind knowledge, as being nothing, and they do not pay attention to the query form of this sentence, as that would be meaningless, but they utter that sentence as stumped of both ends, as one would argue, by it, that God can be known only out of creatures. The philosopher wasn’t able to see even so little, that the word of the saint refers to the human

⁶¹⁰ We know God not only out of the things we know about Him out of creatures, or out of direct experience, but also out of the things which we do not know. Won’t be able to know about the wedding of Christ with the Church, he who doesn’t have the experience of the wedding? The wedding of Christ with the Church, by being way higher than the human wedding, somebody can be elevated to understanding it, without that somebody to have, previously, the experience of the human wedding. One must not know all the created things and circumstances, in order for him to be elevated at the knowledge about God.

⁶¹¹ *At Blessing* 6; G.P. 44: 1269 B. Out of this word too, of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, one can see that the fathers do not reject the knowledge about God out of creatures. But they do not reckon, as Barlaam, that this knowledge is everything, as the scholastic theology did. The fathers admit, above the knowledge about God out of creatures, a knowledge about God by unmediated “sight” of the godlike Persons.

knowledge that belongs, naturally, to everyone, and he didn't refer to that knowledge given, as a gift, by the Ghost⁶¹². If the man, he says, has feeling and mind, as natural power of knowledge, how will be us able to know God through those powers, because God isn't either known through senses nor through mind? Of course, not in another manner than out of the sensitive and intelligible creatures. This is because the knowledge, by being knowledge of the creatures, and that knowledge stopping at the edge of the creatures, out of these, they show him God. But they who have not only the powers of the senses and of the mind, but they have been also imparted with the spiritual and above-mind grace, they will no longer know God out of creatures, but they will know God spiritually too, for God is Ghost, namely in a way that is superior to feeling and mind, as one who have wholly become gods and who know God into God⁶¹³. So, through this (through the union of the mind with the realities which are above-mind, o. n.), are understood the godlike ones, as the same saint says⁶¹⁴, and not through us - namely, for we have totally gone out of ourselves, and for we have become wholly of God. This is for, it is a higher thing to belong to God than to belong to ourselves. So are given, as gift, the godlike things to them who have been united with God.

⁶¹² *About the Godlike Names* 7: 3; G.P. 3: 869 C – 872 B. Dionysus the Areopagite, as Saint Gregory of Nyssa as well, they admitted a knowledge about God out of creatures. But they did that with some concerns. This is because, they asked: "Isn't that right to say that God" who "isn't either sensitive or intelligible", so Who isn't known either through senses or through understanding, He "isn't known out of His being, but out of creatures?". But what he admits with certitude, it is the fact that this God Who is above-senses and above-understanding, we know Him through the union with Him. Barlaam took from what Dionysus said, only the knowledge about God out of creatures, one that was admitted by the saint with some doubt, and Barlaam changed the interrogative form of the sentence in an affirmative one. Barlaam disrobed this sentence of its interrogative character, as also of the fact that Dionysus speaks in it about the natural knowledge which all the people have the necessary power for, and not about that knowledge through the Holy Ghost which are imparted with, only they who believe into Christ, and especially so they who are clean in their heart.

⁶¹³ Palamas is developing here, in continuation, the interpretation he has given to the quoted sentence belonging to Dionysus. He says: if the people have as knowledge powers only the sense and the understanding, and because God doesn't fall either under senses or under understanding, God won't be known through those natural power, except out of creatures. But they who receive the Ghost, as a power of knowledge that is above the natural ones, they will know Him in an unmediated manner, through the union with Him.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

69. Can you see that he gets us far from the will of trying to known God out of creatures, by unveiling us another knowledge that is above-nature, and godlike, and spiritual, one that comes to us, after negating the creatures, through that above-mind union? For he has said that through it are given, as gifts, the godlike realities, and through they are due to be known, namely spiritually and not according to ourselves, once we do not receive the knowledge about God neither through senses nor through mind. This is because, this knowledge is non-consummate, and because it is appropriate only to the non-consummate cogitations. But what wanted the saint to say by mentioning the words “I wonder if not” in connection to the that according-to-us-knowledge about God, a knowledge that comes to us out of creatures? – these words being overlooked by the philosopher as redundant. For we have seen the light and we have heard the voice of God in a mysterious way both with our sensitive eyes and ears, the philosopher thought that he can say that one can know God only out of creatures and through the man’s powers of knowledge. But, to them who can catch the exact meaning of the saint’s words, it will be obvious that the saint teaches clearly that only that beginner knowledge about God it comes from knowing the creatures. That’s why the Saint added: “from this one we ascend to what is beyond all realities, on a certain way, and according to a certain order, according to each one’s power”⁶¹⁵. That’s why, that kind of knowledge was appropriate to them from before the Law, who still were children regarding the knowledge about God⁶¹⁶. And they say about Abraham that he took the beginning of his knowledge from that one, but later on, he no longer spoke and he no longer knew God only through that. What we can say, then, about Job, who, by seeing God limpidly, he was shouting out: “With the hearing of my ear I heard You before, but now my eye has seen You” (Job 42: 5). What can we say about Moses, in that beyond-beings darkness, for forty days? Actually, it was appropriate that to the non-consummate in knowledge, to be placed to them, before the unseen realities of God, the seen realities of the world, as also to the unveiled senses was given the knowledge about God, out of Law, throughs sensitive symbols. Or, again, as there are some people who have been

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid*; G.P. 3: 872 A.

⁶¹⁶ Theophilus of Antioch, *Towards Autolycus* 2: 25.

imparted with a knowledge about the more consummate realities, and more unveiled knowledge of the realities from outside God, likewise there are they who looked at the unseen realities of God, as did it Moses and Paul, and they alike them, although we are guided towards those realities by the realities which we can see.

70. But what's your pursuit, you philosopher, with your sophisms of many sorts, oblique and ill conceived, as for instance with the affirmation that "he who knows about a certain thing that that thing exists and it has cause and it has power, he must know also what that thing is, and then its cause and then its power". If somebody said that God cannot at all be known out of creatures, you would be right to ask for such things, answers to these questions, answers required by any rational being. But, once we place ourselves above the knowledge that is common to everyone by nature, the knowledge of the mysteries of God, a knowledge that comes through the Ghost, what would you benefit, you who resist this knowledge, answers like these which belong to the very-beginner knowledge about God, knowledge that one gains it out of creatures?⁶¹⁷

But you got accustomed to oppose. Because the spiritual people say that there is not only knowledge, but there is also a light seen by the mind, you strive yourself to demonstrate, in details, that also what is called knowledge it is a light too; and, by opposing, you know that you overcome everyone by that. "Without this beginner knowledge, there won't be anybody rational, he says, as there won't be either advancement of the rational one towards consummation". Of course, there won't be somebody a man before being, previously, a child. But if he has become a man, he will leave the things of the child. And if, while being a man, he still cogitates at the things of the child and he praises himself with them, how won't he become a laughing

⁶¹⁷ Barlaam, in his quality as philosopher, he claimed that they who affirmed that they saw God into light, to answers questions which are asked only in the case of knowing a certain created thing: what the substance of the respective thing is and what is its unity and its cause and its power? Saint Gregory Palamas shows him that those questions were already answered by the fact that they who know God into light, they knew God, previously, out of creatures. If they didn't know and didn't recognize God out of creatures, Barlaam could ask them for an answer to those questions, in order him to know what is God Whom they experience by "sight". But thus, one must suppose that in God Who is seen by through experience, there are involved the characters which the rationality asks for, but they are, in the same time surpasses.

stock? And how won't experience that, he who says that he is a Christian, but he still occupies himself with the Hellenes' sciences, attempting to pick up, out of those, the fruit of the knowledge about God?⁶¹⁸

72. And then, what do you want to say by arguing that: "If the rational part of the soul is ill, how can it become understanding by industriousness?". Really ill it is the rationality of that soul that reckons his understanding worthier of trust than the words of the Ghost, and that doesn't cherish the godlike commandments as a great and consummate medicine of the souls. This is because, he said before that these ones can clean up a half of the soul; but now, by abolishing all their cleaning power, he attributes it to the knowledge, by saying that the beginning, the middle, and the end of the knowledge about God, of the health of the soul, and of the cleanness, they come from knowing ever-more things and everything; and that we must not, by any means, to ignore the many realities, if we want to reach something everywhere, but we must achieve the encyclopaedical knowledge about creatures, if we want to be us found worthy of those understandings alike the angels, unitary and undivided⁶¹⁹.

This is, therefore, as somebody would say that he who wants to see an undivided number, he must see that number, first, in its many divisions, and the unity isn't noticed by making abstraction from the many, but only by summing them up. But one must know that that what results out of summing up, that one can be also divided in it parts. But that is about

⁶¹⁸ Saint Gregory Palamas admits the need for knowing God out of creatures, as also the need one to cross through that knowledge. But he reckoned that knowledge as characteristic to those who still are children, from spiritual point of view. They who have progressed spiritually, they must be elevated higher, to that knowledge through "sight", through experience. Barlaam reckoned the first one as the sole possible to everyone.

⁶¹⁹ Because Barlaam conditioned the knowledge about God on the skillfulness of the logical knowing of the creatures, and because not everybody has this skillfulness, he deduced that nobody can heal this illness by guarding the commandments of God. By that, he condemned the majority of the people to a fatal nescience about God, and he reserved that knowledge to the speculative philosophers or, in the best scenario, to the scholars too. That was a conception of fatal intellectual aristocratism, one parallel to the social aristocratism, or of an impossible to mend division of the people related to the participation to the godlike goods. Palamas, according to the Holy Scripture, he affirmed - on the opposite - everyone's capacity, even of the simple people, of knowing God, and of participating, by that, to God, and he deemed that as depending on the people's will to clean themselves of evil.

One Who is without parts⁶²⁰. And I know, as one who has found out from the fathers, by even listening up to some of them and believing them, that both these many and the whole sensitive world, they looked at them not by senses, neither by reasoning, but by a power and a grace characteristic to the deified mind, a power and a grace that make the things which are far away, to be under the eyes, and which shows the future things, in an above-manner way, as being present⁶²¹. Of course, the speaker-about-God from the Areopagus, he extolls the Maker of the nature also out of the things which belong to us by nature⁶²². And that's no wonder. This is for, only Him is the One praised also by the inanimate and without senses and non-rational and irrational realities too; once only to Him is due, eminently, the worshipping into Ghost, which God Himself said about, that

⁶²⁰ Barlaam admits that the knowledge about God must be the result of a unification of the diverse knowledge. But this unity of theirs, in order to be as comprising as possible with the rich unity of God, according to Barlaam it must be composed of as much knowledge as possible. Palamas argued that the unity of God doesn't correspond to a summing up of the parts. This is because, if that had been the case, the unity of God could have been divided again too.

⁶²¹ By reckoning that to The One God, the man cannot ascend except by concentrating all available knowledge, Barlaam conceived God in the impersonal sense of a unit that can be divided too, or that actually is divided in the form of the world; Palamas opposed to Barlaam the God-Person Who is One, and His Tri-personality, namely a unit that cannot be divided, though God can manifest Himself in indefinite works and in their results. According to Palamas, God as One, He is beyond the impersonal pantheistic unity of the reality, and therefore God is beyond the possibility of being reached by unifying all the knowledge. One reaches God by union with Him into love. God's unit is transcendent to the synthesis of the parts of the creation, or to the knowledge. God's unit is the living, original, and indestructible unit of the Person. That's why also at the connection with God, one reached not by unifying the knowledge, similar to the fact that at the unity of the subject one doesn't reach by summing up the knowledge about the part, which the subject manifests through (Dionysius the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Name* 1: 4; G.P. 3: 589-592). One reached this unity through a leap done by the mind with the help of the grace, or by active and loving openness of the human subject to the godlike Subject; namely, for the human subject lets himself to be caught in the loving current that comes from the godlike Subject – and not by summing up the many aspects of the reality known through senses and through reasonings (*About the Godlike Names* 2: 12).

⁶²² Palamas admits that Dionysius admitted as well, a knowledge about God that comes out of the various multitude of the creatures. But the mind must exceed this multitude through the intuition ("sight") of Him Who is One as Person, by extolling Him as the Maker and the Upholder of all realities (*About the Godlike Names* 1: 5; G.P. 3: 593 D). Here isn't only about a summing up of the parts of the creation and of the knowledge about creation, but it is about a surpassing of them, by ascending on another plan, to a unity that is different from the unity of the world's parts.

that is the only true worshipping, the only one worthy of God and the only one that God wants.

73. But out of the words of the Great Dionysus, which the philosopher quoted, without noticing that he did that against himself, by letting aside the others because of their multitude, I am going to mention here only the last one. This one says, in the first chapter from *The Churchly Hierarchy*: “And the common goal of the whole hierarchy it is the zealous love for God and for the godlike realities, whom they serve in a godlike and unitary manner. And before this, the full and without return getting far from the contrary ones, the knowledge about the realities which are in their quality as existences (as creatures), the seeing and the knowing of the holy truth, and the deified impartation with the unitary consummation”⁶²³. Out of these ones, the philosopher deduces the followings: “The hierarchy is the greatest amongst the things given us by God. And the hierarchy’s purpose if the knowledge of the existing realities (of the creatures), as this quote teaches us. So, the best thing from within ourselves it is the knowledge about the existing realities (of the creatures), namely the philosophy”.

What he says likens to what Dionysus said, but only related to the sound of the words and not to their holy meaning. This is because, the Saint says that the true knowledge of the existing realities “it is the total getting far from the contrary realities”, namely abstaining from committing the evil deeds, and that must precede the sanctified, deified, and unitary work. And this is because, as well him who is carried away by the evil deeds he lusts of what seems good to him, but he shows, by deeds, that he doesn’t know what is really good; also, he who is dominated by anger, he wages war to him who opposes what seems good to him; and, simply speaking, everyone who persevere in an evil life, they persevere in a life that seems good to them, but not in a life that is really good. Only him who has got far from evil and who has rejected his ill opinion, only him reckons as evil the things which are really evil, and only him has the true knowledge of the existing realities (of the creatures), and not only an apparent knowledge. That’s why, only the getting far from the evil things it is knowledge about the existing realities in their quality as existing realities (creatures); and, as such, it precedes to that sanctified, deified,

⁶²³ *The Churchly Hierarchy* 1: 3; G.P. 3: 376 A.

and unitary work. And the sanctified, deified, and unitary work, it is the keeping the God's commandments, and that is being achieved by running away from evil and through the persevering and zealous love for God and for the godlike realities.

This is, therefore, the common goal of the entire hierarchy" to hate the things which are contrary to God's commandments and to love God's commandment and to love God Who gave them to us, and, for due to the love for God, the people to live under God's commandments. This is the knowledge of the existing realities (of the creatures), in their quality as existing; this is the seeing of the truth; this is the impartation with consummation; this is, the feasting with the spiritual sight, one that is unveiled, according to the promise, and it illuminates, it deifies, and it nourishes, in an understanding manner, on everyone who, through the cleanness of their heart, they live in it in an understanding manner, or, better said: spiritually.

74. But himself Dionysus obviously says that. This is for, by later on interpreting his own words, for them who do not want to understand the godlike realities and who attempt to crook his words according to they wrong opinions, he said: "I said, therefor, with holiness, he says, that this is the goal of our hierarchy: our likeness to God and our union with God, as much as possible. And to that we are going to reach, as the godlike words teach us, only through the loves and through the holy works. This is for: "he who loves Me, he says, he will keep My words and My Father will love him and We will come to him and We will make to Us a dwelling place within him" (Jn. 4: 24).

Can you see what he calls as the real knowledge of the existing realities (of the creatures)? - the working of the commandments. And which is the end of those ones? - the union with God and the likeness to God. But why he called this likeness as love? - for the love is the fullness of the virtues; and by entering the image, he accomplishes his consummate likeness to God. And by the words "in godlike and unitary manner" and through "the sanctified work", he showed the keeping of the commandments, the exclusive motion towards God and towards the godlike realities. This is for the good won't be a good if it is not done only for good. The getting far from contrary evil, the knowing of the existing realities (of the creatures) and the sanctified seeing and knowledge of the truth,

at their turn, they show the hatred for passions, the disgust for sin, and the running away from sin without ever tuning back to sin.

Finally, “through the unitary consummation” and through “the godlike impartation with The One” and “through that look that nourishes and deifies in understanding manner”, he showed the promised godlike visiting and dwelling, one that consummates through union and it nourishes the eye through sight, the spiritual eye⁶²⁴.

75. So, if only by keeping the commandments it will come the true knowledge and the true union with and likeness to God, what the philosopher calls as knowledge it will be a false knowledge, he limpidly says, at the beginning: “Out of keeping the commandments it is not possible to come this knowledge”. And a little farther, by showing the place where this knowledge comes, he says: “It comes from not ignoring the many, neither the rationalities of the things; better said, it comes from knowing all the things and from striving to find out everything that somebody announces that he knows, whether Hellenes or Egyptians, so that he won’t miss anything of what was told and which are known about the nature of the world, lest by that lack him to ignore God”, once, he says, God can be known only out of creatures. He does something resemblant to one who, by hearing that the body is nourished and maintained only with food, that one would say that he who wants to live, he must not lack any type of food and not to interrupt nourishing himself ever. One like this praises the useless insanity of the rich meals and the passions of the belly’s covetousness, as those would be something as necessary as possible to the human life, while not wanting anything from the superior things.

Doubtlessly, God has given the cogitating part of the soul, as matter, the rationalities of the nature, but as ones which can guide to a higher knowledge. We, therefore, by taking out of

⁶²⁴ Looking at God it “nourishes” the spiritual eye, for this eye assimilated seeing power of God, to its own seeing power, or the light of God to his light, like the physical light from outside strengthen the seeing power of our sensitive eye, or like a beloved person helps us to see her / his beauties, through the love which that person communicates to us, a love that highlights those beauties. This nourishing takes place through a union between the believer who sees, and God Who is looked at. The look is consummated by the fact that it becomes unitary, namely by the fact that is focused only upon Him Who truly is One, and so the look gets far from the many; by the fact that into That One there is everything. This total attention upon Him, it is nourished by the full love for Him, and it implies in itself also the consummate obedience to Him.

them only that much that we need, we leave what exceeds that, to them who cannot receive a more consummate food. And if these ones, even after they have passed over the age of their childhood, they do not want to leave that food that is appropriate to children, we try to pluck them off, like on some monsters, from this bosom of the universe, because of no longer being that beneficial to them, and we do that as ones who use that bosom of the universe with temperance, once we have parted ourselves with that food that is no longer appropriate to us. But they, because of no longer being children, but they are consummate in evilness, they rise themselves against us, and they rather aspire to pull us too, down in their evil habit, rather than they to ascend at the due measure.

76. That's why I am saying that the Son comes with the Father and They make a dwelling place in that one "who knows the rationalities of the world; this is for that one knows the truth; and God is the Truth and the Father of the truth. But also, anyone who is knowledgeable, he leans on and he lives in what he knows. So, he who has the knowledge of the things, he will be steadfastly founded into God. And by having his steadfast dwelling place into God, rightly so, That One He said that He will come and He will make to Himself a dwelling place in him. This one is, he says, him who have made his mind full of understanding light". This would be the most consummate knowledge about God, as the philosopher says.

But I am hearing the Gospel saying that the devil is liar and the father of the lie⁶²⁵. And I know that through the same feeling, knowledge, and science, we embrace the contrary things too. So, he who know the truth, he knows the lie too. If, therefore, according to the philosopher's words, he who know he as well leans on and he lives in what he knows, and that's why – according to him – he who has the knowledge of the things he will be into God and God will be into him, then also the lie and the father of the lie have made a dwelling place within him, and he has his soul full of the darkness of his

⁶²⁵ Barlaam separate, strictly, the knowledge about God and the keeping of the commandments, of the theology, from living, from cleanness, from fulfilling the commandments as sign and means of strengthening the love for God and for people, and as means for cleaning and sanctifying. He transformed the theology is theoretical philosophy. This is the conception that take hold on the occidental scholastic and Protestant theology. When the Protestantism denied the value of the deed on all plans, it didn't anything else but it drew the last conclusion out of the theological rationalism of the scholastics.

mind. And, actually, much darkness overshadows that soul that unveils such cogitations. I wonder, He who said: I know who are you: you are the saint of God” (Mk. 1: 24), he too has Christ in himself because of that knowledge? But he who know and who doesn’t fulfill the will of God, has him steadfastly dwelling God within Him? How then “he will be beaten much” (Lk. 12: 47)? Christ tells us in Gospels that His dwelling and the dwelling of the Father, it comes out of keeping us the commandments, and the showing comes out of dwelling. But the philosopher reckons just the opposite, that the dwelling comes out of what it seems to him as apparent. And about appearance, on the opposite, he says that it comes out of knowledge, and not out of commandments, out of a knowledge which he declared before that it doesn’t come, at all, out of keeping the commandments. He filled his own mind up with this sort of light and truth. And not even that he said before, about this knowledge, that it cannot be provided by the godlike commandments, but he even called it as philosophy, one that is provided by the disciplines of the philosophy. By that, he proved that such a knowledge is insanity in front of God. So, what he reckoned before as insanity, now he has declared it as being God and Word – The One Begotten of the Father. He filled up his mind with this sort of light and truth.

77. But, because through the same feeling you comprise the contrary ones too, when are you feeling yourself warm you the philosopher? When you body burns by this quality of the warmth, or when, by having your body cold, you take notice of the contrary of the warmth? Of course, when you feel the warmth within yourself, and when you burn because of that heat. So, you will truly have God within yourself when you have within your soul the godlike habit. And the truly godlike habit is the love for God. And this comes through the holy working the commandments. This is for, despite this love is since their beginning, it is also at their middle and at their end. This is for the love is God Who promised only in this His coming and His dwelling and His showing. So, you will be useful to yourself and to others, and you will be able to correct yourself and others, when you achieve, out of fulfilling the commandments such an inward state. Because now, by pretending that you want to correct others, you have proven yourself as one who breaks them and gossips them. And you break them while praising yourself as correcting them, I am going to show further on. But

the obvious proof that under your mask of straightening them you rather attempt to denigrate them, it is the great zeal you manifest for not allowing your writings to be read by us, despite you wrote them intending to correct us. That is like some physician said that he prepared a very useful drink, for a sick, but then he would totally stop that sick using that drink. From here it is obvious that you knew, in advance, what it has been shown now openly, that those called by you as medicines are, instead, venoms. So, you knew from before that you hadn't been left undiscovered, when all of these had been said.

78. But, without your permission, we laid our hand on some of your writings, at the end of which you say that you want to serve towards straightening, relatedly to what one of your friends told you wrongly about the knowledge about God. And what your friend told you wrongly is this: "They who are clean in their heart the know that through the holy light that appears within them that there is God; and that God is like a light, better said God is a spring of understanding and immaterial light. And they you haven't ascended up to this work, they always look at the common Spring of the Providence: in the created realities, the kindness itself; in the living creatures, the life itself; and, simply, in all realities, they look at The One Who is everything and placed above all realities".

And that, says the philosopher, it isn't right, and I know that he said bad things about these aspects also on other occasions. This is because, by not taking heed at the word "like" added to the word light, he declared that we would say that we would know what kind of light God is. But, once we have drawn the attention upon the addition "the spring of the light", and we have concentratedly deduced that "God is the Spring of the light", we ask him what meaning is having here the word "like"? And he confessed, unwillingly, his nescience, and he asked for forgiveness. This is for, one cannot understand this word except as "somewhat like"⁶²⁶.

⁶²⁶ We are noticing the unliterary sense which the light seen by hesychasts and by saints it must be understood in, according to Saint Gregory Palamas. But despite the whole explanation provided by Palamas, that bad will regarding the interpretation given to this light according to Barlaam's affirmations, it has persisted up to these days at the Catholic adversaries of Palamas and of the Eastern Tradition about the godlike light, seen by the saints and which is seen through the saints. The "friend" who told Barlaam these things, it seems that it was Palamas.

But now he has been caught with something else: “By becoming obvious that he says that even to the most-advanced seers of God, God makes Himself known only from the existing realities (out of creatures), the knowledge about God that is being learnt here through the showing of an understanding light, as one that is something else than that out of creatures (out of the existing realities), it isn’t, by any means, a real one”.

We must answer these by saying that once it has been proven through the extended analysis which we have done it above, that God isn’t known only out of the existing realities (out of creatures), but also out of the inexistent realities in the sense of exceeding, namely out of the uncreated realities⁶²⁷, but also through the eternal light that is above all realities, that now is given, as gift, on the measure of an earnest, to the worthy ones, and in that endless life it will surround them endlessly, then this sight is necessarily true; and he who doesn’t admit this one as true, he has fallen off the godlike knowledge.

“But the whole knowledge about God, he says, it results out of the realities from around God, and not out of the realities of God”. But where have we said, in our word, that this showing isn’t from “around God”? This is for, we place that light above all the realities which are otherwise, but we do not say by any means that that light is out of what God is. And you can find the speakers-of-God placing also many other visions above that knowledge about God achieved out of creatures. But they discern this one from all the other ones and they honor it eminently with the godlike name, as the only deifying showing of God.

But now we must end this “Word” that it has become too extended, and that belongs to the words we wrote in order to reject the affirmations of the philosopher in his *Words about Knowledge*.

⁶²⁷ Here Saint Gregory Palamas is specifying which are “the inexistent realities” in comparison to the created realities, which “exist”. They do not exist, for they are above what we know in a natural way – we who exist. Therefore, here isn’t only about a theoretical negative theology, but it is something way more positive and fuller of existence than the created realities are.

Of Saint Gregory Palamas

Out of the Word of Saint John Chrysostom at the First Martyr Stephen⁶²⁸

“Nothing was disregarded by the disciple in his desire of following his Master, but he proved both the innocence of his soul and the manhood of his patience. That’s why he was found worthy of the godlike sight. “This is for, by looking, he says, at the sky, he saw the godlike glory and Jesus sitting on the right hand of God” (Acts 7: 55). And the honor of our Savior is of such a kind, that the martyr placed it above that of the angels. “This is for, by looking, he says, at the sky, he saw the glory of God and Jesus sitting on the right hand of God”; so, the martyr saw not only the glory and the place of the unseen ones, but he even saw the Desired One Himself Whom even the heavenly armies fear of looking at (1 Pt. 1: 12). This is for, there the martyr focused his eye, where the Cherubs cover their faces; the martyr look at those realities which the Seraphs do not dare to look at (Isa. 6: 2). The martyr ascended with his sight at the endless height, and by that he was shown as above the Angels, higher than the Masteries, and beyond Chairs. This was for, he was attracted by the word of our Master, a word promised from before: “Where I am, there will be My deacon too” (Jn. 12: 26). Stephen is the first deacon of our Savior, as he is too the first martyr of the ascesis, and many became martyrs by seeing Stephen’s ascesis. This is for Stephen is much loved by them who live in ascesis.

That’s why he shouts out too, with his deed itself, before Paul: “You make yourself followers to me, as I to Christ” (1 Cor.

⁶²⁸ Out of the Word of Saint John Chrysostom at the First Martyr Stephen, G.P. LIV, 701 and the followings.

11: 1). This is for, it is possible and it is useful to the who live in ascesis. I am too, a disciple, and I was the first one living into ascesis after the Master and I was the first to look at the realities hidden into heavens. This is for, I have seen the Son of the Father sitting on the right hand of the Father and I have seen as accomplished the word: “The Lord said to My Lord: sit at My right hand, until I will render Your enemies as floor to Your feet” (Ps. 109: 1⁶²⁹; Mt. 20: 44; Acts 2: 35; Hebr. 1: 13).

⁶²⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 110: 1: “THE Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 109: 1: “Said the Lord to My Lord: “Sit at My right hand, until I will place Your enemies as floor to Your feet.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

Of Saint Gregory Palamas

About the Godlike and Deifying Impartation; or about the Godlike and Above-Nature Simplicity

1. Let's now see what both⁶³⁰ of them say and it seems to be somewhat important: "If you say that the grace from within saints is uncreated, not because something else but for they are imparted with God, for all the creatures are imparted with God – for God crosses through all of them and he shares to all of creatures, to some of them their existence, to some other of them, in addition to existence also the feeling and rational life, or understanding – the grace will be uncreated regarding all the creatures, to some of the creatures in order they to exist, to some other creatures in order they to survive, and to other creatures, in addition to these, in order these creatures to think and understand".

We co-speak with the saints, so that we wanted to disregard these affirmations by defending ourselves. This is for, in the Christian dogmas, the guide is the faith and not the proving. But because there are people who could be deceived by the affirmations of these two, we must ask these two, at our turn,: if you say that the grace from within saints is created, because of the fact that all the creates ones are imparted with God, to you, all the creatures will be called as holy and all the creatures will be deified by you; there will be holy not only the rational creatures, or, better said, those amongst the rational

⁶³⁰ "Both" must be Barlaam and Akindynos. This writing must date from the year 1342 and it must be one of the first writing after Akindynos took over the fight against Palamas, after Barlaam, disapproved by the Synod from the year 1342, he left, definitively, for Occident. Palamas, while referring to Akindynos, he didn't forget either about Barlaam, because the affirmation about the created character of the grace was taken by Akindynos from Barlaam. This writing is comprised in ed. Hristou, tome II, Thessaloniki, 1966, pp. 137-163.

ones who are imparted with the deifying gift of the Ghost, but the irrational ones too, and even the inanimate ones. And what about the fact that some people are imparted with an existence and a life which are higher than those of other people? And what about the fact that one can see differences amongst saints? According to your judgment, to you the bee will be holier than the fly, and the sheep than the bee, and others than the sheep, and the human being more than all of these, and so might be even Isabella; and again, the ant would be holier than other insect, or, if you wish, the ox or the elephant or another amongst animals will be holier than the ram, and the human being will be holier than those ones, even if he is as Ahab. Such a saint will be also he who attracts you through worthy of contempt dogmas, to such risible opinions⁶³¹, and who is, manifestly, an enemy of the Gospel of Christ⁶³².

2. If the deifying grace of the Ghost from within saints, it had been created and it had been something like a habit⁶³³, or like a natural imitation, as he who walks amongst us is teaching us and so he troubles us⁶³⁴, the saints aren't deified above-nature, neither are they born out of God (Jn. 1: 13), nor are they Ghost as ones who are born out of Ghost (Jn. 3: 6), and so they cannot become of one Ghost with our Lord by attaching themselves to Him (1 Cor. 6: 13). If that had been the case, Christ wouldn't have given, only when He came to us and

⁶³¹ I think that he is hinting here at Barlaam, who attracted Akindynos to his teaching.

⁶³² The adversaries of Palamas rejected his argument, that the grace is uncreated, for the fact that he who is imparted with the grace he is imparted with God, with the argument that then all the creatures will have to be imparted with the uncreated grace, because all the creatures are imparted, to diverse degrees, with God. Palamas answers them that, according to such judgment, all the creatures should be holy to different degrees. By this, he lays the ground for difference of a totally another order, between the impartation with the grace enjoyed by the believers, and the differences amongst the gradual impartations of created goods enjoyed by diverse creatures. The simplistic judgment of Barlaam and of his adherences, it placed on the same plan the impartation with something uncreated from within God Himself and the impartations with goods produced by God, through His creator acts, namely between the direct and person impartation with God and the indirect impartations with some features produced through creator acts by God's kindness. It is like somebody would place on the same plan the fact that she/he received from another person something created by that person, or she/he received that person as such, or a power that irradiated out of that person, through love. Barlaam, as representative of the scholastics, he locked up the whole life of the world into the created order.

⁶³³ The scholastic theology started to define the grace as a created "habit", even though it called the grace, in the same time, as supra-natural habit.

⁶³⁴ He who was doing that at that time, he was Akindynos, the descendant of Barlaam.

only them who believe into His name, power they to become sons of God (Jn. 1: 12). This is because, even before the coming of Christ, that natural imitation existed amongst all the peoples and it exists even now amongst believers and unbelievers, if He is within us in a natural manner.

But you listen to Pious Maximos, who says in his *Dialogue with Pyrrhus*: “And Moses and David and all of them who have received within them the godlike work, by rejecting the human and bodily traits, they have been moved by the Ghost of God”⁶³⁵. And again, in another place: “The image by ascending to archetype, and by being conquered by the godlike work, better said by becoming god through deification, he is sweetened by ecstasy more than the existing creatures and he thinks, at himself, into the archetype, due to the grace of the Ghost that has overwhelmed him”⁶³⁶.

3. So, they who are deified, they not only will become better by nature, but they will receive the godlike work, of the Holy Ghost Himself⁶³⁷. This is said by Great Basil too: “When we think at the dignity characteristic to Him, we see Him together with the Father and with the Son and when we think at the working grace within those who are partakers to Him, we say that He is within us”⁶³⁸.

But if the grace was within the saints too as in all the creatures, also as God, according to your wise contrivances, like it creates the corresponding ones in all the other creatures, what would be the need for Christ and for His presence like?⁶³⁹

⁶³⁵ G.P. 91: 297 A.

⁶³⁶ *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1076 C.

⁶³⁷ The grace elevates them who receive the grace, out of the created order and it places them, through the unmediated communion with God, into the created order, above-nature.

⁶³⁸ *About the Holy Ghost* 26: 63; G.P. 32: 184 C.

⁶³⁹ That is actually a thesis of the scholastic theology that the Ghost creates the grace within us, and therefore also the holiness within saints, as the grace created all the corresponding ones within all the creatures. So, the holiness wouldn't really godlike within saints, but it would be created as well. The saint remains, as well, locked up within the order of the created. Rightly so, Palamas asked those who argued that thesis: but then, what was needed for the embodiment of the Son of God? The Holy Ghost couldn't have created the grace, within people, even without the becoming-man of the Son of God? Or, out of this scholastic teaching it would turn out that also everything that is apart in the humanity of Christ, it would have been created. But then, what the Son of God embodied Himself for, because He was able to created all of these in a humanity, without making Himself the Subject, of the Hypostasis of the assumed humanity, and without communicating to His assumed humanity His uncreated energies? But in our humanity, the Ghost of Christ does the same thing as within Christ as man: the Ghost makes us subjects of the uncreated divine energies of God, or of Christ. Christ

What would be needed for the Baptism into Him, and what would be needed for the mastery and the power which come to us out of Him? What would be needed for, the breathed Ghost, sent and dwelled since the beginning? This is for, like the Ghost was in all realities, likewise He was within us. And God will be too, for He deifies, as He creates⁶⁴⁰. But the Great Basil says limpidly: "If God does the same thing by creating and by giving birth, Christ won't be Creator and Father through the same work. This is for Christ is God. And we won't need the adoption through the Holy Ghost"⁶⁴¹. "And He has risen us together, says the Apostle, and He places us together into the heavenly ones, into Christ Jesus. This is for, you are saved into grace, through faith. And this isn't from you, because the grace belongs to God; not out of deeds, in order nobody to boast himself" (Eph. 2: 6-8).

But you promise the deification only out of the deeds of the natural imitation, by saying that the deifying grace and the godlike grace it is the imitation out of the nature's powers. But, "if somebody doesn't have the Ghost of Christ, that one won't belong to Christ" (Rom. 8: 9); and "The Ghost of God dwells within us" (*ibid*); and "all of us have been watered out of a sole Ghost" (1 Cor. 12: 13); and "he who sticks with the Lord, he is of the same Ghost" (1 Cor. 6: 17); and "Christ dwells within the hearts of believers, through the Ghost" (Eph. 3: 16-17); and "by listening to the word of the truth, which we have also believed through, we have been sealed into that Holy Ghost of the promise that is the earnest of our salvation" (Eph. 1: 13-14); and "into this we will know that we will have remained into Him

took us out of a life spent exclusively within the border of the created. The conception about the created grace, it either makes impossible any unmediated communication between God and the world, or it confounds God and the world to one another, in a pantheistic manner.

⁶⁴⁰ According to the scholastic teaching of Barlaam and Akindynos, there is no difference between the creator and the deifier works of God. Everything is deified by being created, and that means that the creation itself it is the birth out of God. The grace is, at its turn, a created power given to the one who receives the Mysteries. But then, what one would receive the Mysteries for? The conclusion is either the locking up within the hermetic borders of the created, or a pure pantheism.

⁶⁴¹ Saint Basil, *Against Eunomius* 4; G.P. 29: 697 A. If the deification is one with the creation, there won't be needed a special work of the Holy Ghost. But the Holy Ghost adopts them who have been created, and He elevated them on a superior plan of life, to the life common with God. The Holy Ghost elevates us from the plan of the creation in the unmediated relation with Person-God. The Holy Ghost is the proof of the free love of God for us, by no longer letting us living as simple creatures of Him.

and He into us, for He has given to us out of His Ghost" (1 Jn. 4: 13); and "you haven't take slavery Ghost, but adoption Ghost" (Rom. 8: 15).

4. And you declare that they are imparted only with creatures, and they see only the creatures, they who, for the fullest cleanness of their heart, the limpidly see and the experience the shininess of God and they receive the Son Who comes and makes a dwelling place and He dwells within them with the Father and He shows Himself to them, according to the promise. What are you saying, man? Do you reckon that the Ghost of Christ, the Ghost of God, the Holy Ghost of the promise, the earnest of the inheritance of the saints, the Ghost of the adoption, the promise of the Ghost which was taken by the Son from the Father and the Son has given it to them who believe in Him, the Ghost poured over the male and female servants of God, according to Prophet Joel (Joel 3: 1), according to you, is that Ghost creature and natural imitation, so that you call them who do not want to blaspheme, as wandering from place to place and ill-faithed? Don't you feel ashamed, man, of the Apostles who says that "your bodies are church of the Ghost Who dwells within you" (1 Cor. 3: 16)? Deigned him, ever before, to honor the abode of the servant with the name of church? And if the Ghost have been be within us as in all things, each one among the speechless animals and beasts and among the creature crawling on earth, it would have been the church of God. Not to mention here the fact that the Hellenes too, they honor these ones into they who honor them too. The Apostle would have vainly praised the believers, if that had been the case, namely on the experienced believers: "Don't you know that you are the church of God and the Ghost of God dwells within you?" (1 Cor. 3: 16), "lest you are untried" (2 Cor. 13: 5).

5. But "you share the godlike Ghost, he says, by saying that He is subordinate, uncreated, and supra-ordinate, and you measure God by saying that some of the saints receive a greater grace, while others receive a smaller grace; and this isn't the likeness to God which each one earns it by imitation, but it is something else than that, something that comes from above and it is a gift and it is uncreated".

Whom are you saying all of these against? Against us, or against the prophet? or, better said, you say these against God Who says through on of the prophet: "I will pour My Ghost over all bodies" (Joel 13: 1); and you say that also against the apostle

who speaks about: “The divisions of the Holy Ghost” (Hebr. 2: 4); and against Dionysus who limpidly writes: “One is The One Whom they want, they who have the same image, but Whom they are not unitarily imparted with, despite He is One, but He shares to each one the godlike ones which are appropriate to him, together with the fulfillment according to his worthiness”⁶⁴².

So, not the Ghost is divided and quantified, but rather He measures them who are imparted, for He imparts Himself to each one, according to that one’s worthiness, according to the Ghost’s savior and healing righteousness. Properly said, The Ghost doesn’t divide Himself but the illuminates undividedly, but we cannot comprise Him wholly⁶⁴³.

6. These things were written also about Paul, briefly, when the great light spoke to Paul, enveloping him like a lightning bolt (Acts 9: 3; 24: 13). And they who climbed the mountain, together with the Lord, they saw His glory “not whole, in order they not to lose, together with their sight, their lives too”⁶⁴⁴. So, not only that the Ghost is undivided in the divided human beings, but the Ghost unites too, them who are imparted according to their power, as a unifying power, and the Ghost elevates them towards the deifying unity and simplicity of the Father Who gathers them up. Thus, by getting out with kindness, for the union of the ones who are under the care of the Providence, and by multiplying Himself, the Ghost stiller mains within the Father and according to that above-nature power⁶⁴⁵. Even though this overpouring and sending and advancing is showing – “for to each one was given the showing of the Ghost towards benefit” (1 Cor. 12: 7) – can one say that

⁶⁴² *About the Churchly Hierarchy* 1: 2; G.P. 3: 373 B.

⁶⁴³ The mystery of this undivided impartation it implies the mystery of the Ghost’s quality as Person. Anybody desires the unitary wholeness of the beloved person, but she/he receives that wholeness as much as she/he can. She/he is given that wholeness wholly, for the beloved person gives herself/himself wholly, as a gift, but she/he receives her/him as much as she/he can, depending on how great her/his receiving love is. One receives that wholeness more, another less; and one receives it more according to an aspect, while another receives it more according to some other aspect, according to her/his capacity of love, namely of receiving.

⁶⁴⁴ The third sticheron from the *Lithia* on 6th of August.

⁶⁴⁵ We can see a resemblance to the fact that the person goes out towards those whom the person communicates with, but the person still remains as a unitary spring of her/his manifestations, undivided in herself/himself, though, in the same time, the person communicates herself/himself wholly through each of her/his manifestation and to several persons simultaneously.

the Ghost is divided, by measuring His showing according to the measure of them who are united with Him in a mysterious manner? And if He never show Himself consummately, such showing being useless to everyone, but the Ghost exceeds, infinitely, all showing and understanding, can one say that the Ghost is divided and is composed of something subordinate and supraordinate? Can't you understand, you who are wise in all regards, either the fact that what is shown, or what is thought, it isn't imparted with God, it isn't God's part, so that God would have suffered certain division, as you say, but He shows and not-shows Himself wholly, He is understood and non-understood, and He is imparted and He remains unimparted?⁶⁴⁶

7. And if, according to the Great Dionysus: "the deification is the likeness to God and the union with God"⁶⁴⁷, how could we admit that the deification is a natural imitation? We need a likeness, in order us to be in harmony to that union which the deification is done through. And without union, that likeness is not enough for deification. And the likeness we need, it is that coming to us out of working and keeping the godlike commandments, one that isn't committed only through natural imitation, but by the power of the Ghost, a power that comes to us out of the holy birth of ours from above and that is imprinted, in an untold manner, into the baptized ones. Through that, they who "not out of blood, neither out of the man's will, not out the will of the body, but they have been born out of God" (Jn. 1: 13), as some recently born children: "they can reach the measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4: 13). "He won't know something of the ones which he received from the fathers, neither will he work, he who hasn't his existence in a godlike manner"⁶⁴⁸.

⁶⁴⁶ To the simplistic affirmation the adversary, that God either He doesn't show Himself and He doesn't give Himself as a gift, at all, or He shows and gives Himself, as a gift, wholly, Palamas opposes the living understanding of the mystery of the person, and of the dialectical mode which, on one hand, the person shows and gives himself as a gift, and on the other hand the person cannot be received wholly. God, as loving Person, He manifests Himself and He gives Himself, as a gift, wholly, in each of the above-nature works, but, in the same time, he remains undivided in Himself, or He remains as wholly undivided and unimpartable. This is for, even the human person can be seen and cannot be seen wholly, in any act and manifestation of the person, or the person gives herself-himself, as a gift, in any of her/his acts or manifestation, or the person gives herself/himself as a whole while remaining ungive, as whole.

⁶⁴⁷ *The Churchly Hierarchy* 1: 3; G.P. 3: 376 A.

⁶⁴⁸ *Quoted Word* 2: 1; G.P. 3: 393 B.

So, please learn, you my beloved, that the godhead has been above-nature since the beginning. Neither at the beginning the nature ascends by itself. What then could be its end like, as natural and uncreated? And if, through its characteristic beginning, it is way above the natural imitation, what could be like - once consummate - natural imitation? John of Zachariah baptizes too. But only into water (Mt. 3: 11; Mk. 1: 8; Lk. 3: 16; Jn. 1: 26, 31033; Acts 1: 5; 11: 16). Jesus, the Son of God, he baptized too, but into water and Ghost (Jn. 3: 5). What's added to it? Only the name? Not at all. But it is itself the grace and the deifying power, Himself the Holy Ghost, poured into the baptized one, not according to the being, but according to the grace that starts from Him, through the grace of the holiness that is, by nature, within Him. And if this is creature and we, who have been imparted with it, we have been imparted with something created, how will be the Holy Ghost uncreated?⁶⁴⁹

8. But if we say together with the Great Athanasius, that "we are made partaker to the godlike nature through the impartation with the Ghost, so that it would be insane him who said that the Ghost is out of created nature, and not out of the nature of the Son"⁶⁵⁰. And how Christ, the Son of God, by baptizing Himself⁶⁵¹, as well into faith as John too, and by seeding power and grace into the baptized ones, He is "declared", according to Paul, namely He is known and confessed as: "The Son of God into power and according to the ghost of the holiness and of the resurrection" (Rom. 1: 4)?

So, what is the power of God that was shown and that proved Jesus as Son of God? Was that a creature? And what was Jesus recognized like, as Son of God, due to that power?⁶⁵²

⁶⁴⁹ In the scholastic doctrine represented by Barlaam and Akindynos, the grace isn't a ray of the love starting from within the Holy Ghost, but it would be something created. But then, the grace either won't start from within the Ghost, because of being – if that had been the case – the Holy Ghost created too, or the question will raise: how could still be given to us, as gift, through grace, especially the Holy Ghost? The ghost wouldn't have been, in such a case, actually, a Person, into the grace we are given, as a gift. We wouldn't have entered an unmediated connection with Him.

⁶⁵⁰ *Epistle towards Serapion* 1: 24; G.P. 26: 585 C – 588 A.

⁶⁵¹ Palamas is referring here to Jn. 3: 22, where it is said that Jesus was baptizing as well. But at Jn. 4: 2, it is added: "though Jesus wasn't baptizing, but His disciples did".

⁶⁵² The negation of the showing of the uncreated grace, or of the unmediated power of God, it has consequences amongst the most undesirable, for itself the faith that Christ was the embodied Son of God. What would have been Him proven by as such, if nothing uncreated had been shown within world, and into our humanity, through Him?

And let aside the power that He cleaned up lepers, He illuminated blind people, He straightened the hunchbacked, he healed the paralyzed – because of being that a Pharisaic shortsightedness to look first at what it is – but that power that firstly untied, in an unseen manner, the chain of the sins, and it gave place to the Ghost of the holiness and it directed and it illuminated the inward man and it resurrected through the union with God, from dead, and it has made the soul living in a godlike manner, and it has given the truly godlike and really existent life of God. This is for the resurrection of the body is nets to the resurrection of the soul. And the death of the soul is the straying from the life into God⁶⁵³. And this is the really awful death.

And that one from after, namely that of the body, it is all-desired. This is for, that is a sign of the love of God for people⁶⁵⁴. Of it will be deprived, woe to them, the group of them who will be condemned at the future judgment. This is because, them who didn't use well the talent of the godlike grace, given them by God, it will remain to them a forever union with the second death, as John unveiled us in his Apocalypse (Apoc. 20: 14 and 21: 8), a union worse than death. And if those ones will live without dying and will be dead in the same time, here too are many who live as they would be dead, as the Lord of the life and of the death told us (Mt. 8: 22).

So, there is a death of the soul too, despite the soul remaining, by nature, immortal. How will the therefore live, by being imparted with the created life? The soul will be rather dead, while living this life. So, the soul must be imparted with that life that doesn't part with the Ghost, if the soul wants to resurrect to a higher life⁶⁵⁵. That's why Basil the Great, who was imparted with that and so he spoke out of his experience: "And the life which the Ghost communicates out of Himself into another hypostasis, that life won't be separated from the Ghost, but the Ghost has too the life in Himself and they who are

⁶⁵³ Saint Basil the Great, *Word at "Not God Is the Cause of the Evil"*; G.P. 34: 375 A.

⁶⁵⁴ Theophilus of Antioch, *Towards Autolytus* 21: 26; G.P. 6: 1092 C – 1093 A.

⁶⁵⁵ Only the godlike uncreated Ghost gives us immortal life, namely a truly living life. Without the Ghost, the soul despite being immortal by nature, the soul will live a dead immortal life, and that is the most awful thing.

imparted with Him they too live in a godlike manner, as ones who have achieved the godlike and heavenly life”⁶⁵⁶.

9. But, do you want us to teach this too, with the whole clarity, namely the fact that they who have been found worthy of being deified by receiving the Holy Ghost Himself, they do not receive Him according to His being, but according to that illumination and uncreated grace? Listen to him who says: “The purpose of the hierarchy is the likeness and the union, as much as possible, with God Who makes them who follow Him, as godlike images, as all-transparent and unstained mirrors which receive the ray of the initial light and of the godlike origin”⁶⁵⁷.

And if by being One He Who doesn’t impart Himself unitarily to everyone, but He imparts Himself diversely, what will impede the saint and they who aren’t saints, to be imparted with God, but there to be also differences between those impartations, by being one uncreated and another created? Of if somebody asked Athanasius the Great - who said “One God the Father”, or the beginning of all realities, according to apostle (! Cor. 8: 6), “but the Word if out of the Father in a born way and the Ghost is out of the Father in a proceeded way”⁶⁵⁸ -: how do you reckon, after you have affirmed that all realities are out of the Father, that only the Son and the Ghost are really unseparated from the Father, Athanasius would answer him immediately that that is due to the difference of subsistence (διὰ τὴν τὴν ὑπάρξεως διαφορὰ), for the Son and the Ghost are out of the Father as the shininess and the ray of light⁶⁵⁹, namely through the Self-subsistence (αὐθυποστάτος).

⁶⁵⁶ *Against Eunomius* 5; G.P. 29: 772 B. The Ghost, as supreme Hypostasis of the life, he communicated the truly immortal and living life to another hypostasis, namely to another person. This is for, if it is characteristic to a person to communicate her/his life to another person, all the more is that characteristic to the Holy Ghost Who is the Supreme Communicating Person. Through this ceaseless communication of godlike life from the immortal and truly alive Person, the human person will be elevated and remains into an immortal truly and fully alive life, if the human person open herself / himself to the communication with the Ghost. Otherwise, the human person remains immortal but not quite alive. The Ghost and those persons have, through communion, a sole life, that life that is truly godlike and immortal, and alive. Except the Ghost and His uncreated, Self-existing, and inexhaustible life, there isn’t personal life not only immortal but also truly and fully alive. A live having a created content, that content being, of course, created through the Ghost as well, it still will have the shortcoming of the created, so that it will somehow be dead, and of an unbearable monotony.

⁶⁵⁷ Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Godlike Hierarchy* 3: 2; G.P. 3: 165 A.

⁶⁵⁸ Pseudo-Athanasius, *Dialogue about Trinity* 1: 5; G.P. 28: 1125 A.

⁶⁵⁹ Saint Athanasius, *Against Arians* 1: 20; G.P. 26: 53 B.

Likewise, we are going to say, that, though all the realities are imparted with God, the difference between the impartation of the saints and the impartation of all the others, it is very big. This is for, you tell me why, among the realities which are imparted with God in order they to live sensitively or rationally or understandingly, there is not which we say about its life that it would be in the image of God and deified, neither that one of them would be godlike, or penetrated by God, or bearer of God, or, better said, that it would be God, if that doesn't belong among the deified ones? And the realities having by nature only a life according to the senses, or even those which totally lack the feeling, no one of them ever happen to live in a godlike manner, regardless they too are imparted with God.

10. Can you see that, despite God being in all realities, and regardless all realities being imparted with God, God is only within the saints and only the saints are imparted with God in a proper sense? And thus, it is a true and sure thing, that as there are many called as gods, but we have only one true God; as there are and they are called as sons of God, but we preach a sole true Son of God, for He is also the One-Begotten, likewise there being many or, better said, all of them who are imparted with God, but only the saints are imparted with God and with Christ. "For it is impossible, says Paul, that they who have been enlightened and who have tasted out of the heavenly gift, and who have been made partakers to the Holy Ghost" (Hebr. 6: 4), to be like before they have been imparted. But also, our Lord promises that He will come and He will make dwelling place at them who love Him and who are loved by Him (Jn. 14: 23), of course, like He wasn't and He wasn't dwelling within them before.

Then, they who are deified, they must have much likeness to God, and the adopted ones they must have much likeness to the Son. So, as only God exist, only Him lives, only Him is saint, only Him is good, "only Him having the immortality and dwelling into the unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6: 16), despite there are many who exist and live, being they saints and good and immortal and dwelling into the light and into the place of the living ones, likewise the saints alone are they who are imparted with God, though all of them are imparted with God in a way.

11. Do you admit that such a great difference of impartation it is enough to show us the impartation of them

who live in a godlike manner, as an uncreated impartation? But Paul said too: "I no longer live, but Christ live in me" (Gal. 1: 20)? Then Maximos too, he said about himself - and about them like himself - that "they do not bear into him the temporary life, that has beginning and end, but the godlike and eternal life of the Word Who dwells within them"⁶⁶⁰. And again: "The godlike and non-understood life, though it given the joy of itself to them who enjoy it by grace, but it doesn't give them the understanding. This is because it remains forever non-understood, even into impartation, to them who enjoy such life; this is fore, this life has according to its nature, as one that is uncreated, the limitlessness"⁶⁶¹. And again: "He gives as reward, to them who listen to Him, the uncreated godhead"⁶⁶². And he calls as uncreated godhead "the en-hypostatical illumination, that one that is uncreated, but it is a non-understood showing into the worthy ones"⁶⁶³.

12. And Athanasius the Great says: "When we are called as partakers to Christ and partakers to God, it is shown the chrism and the seal that is not out of the nature of the created realities"⁶⁶⁴. And again: "This is the God's love for people, that whom He is Maker, then He later becomes Father"⁶⁶⁵. And He makes Himself that when the people He created receive "in their hearts the Ghost of the Son who shouts out: Abba Father" (Gal. 4: 6; Rom. 8: 15). Otherwise, they wouldn't have been made sons, because of being they creatures by nature, if they hadn't received the Ghost of Him Who exist by nature and truly⁶⁶⁶.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1144 C.

⁶⁶¹ *Towards Thalassius* 61; *Scholium* no. 18; G.P. 90: 644 D – 645 D; *The Romanian Philokalia*, volume III, p. 347.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.* "The en-hypostatical illumination" is that illumination that has God the Word as its hypostasis, or as its Person, out of Whom starts and into Whom it has its foundation and spring. The en-hypostatical illumination is the manifestation of the Supreme, Eternal, and Inexhaustible Person. The human person reaches that life that is illuminated such, through the leap of the faith, but also of the gift from God, above what it represents the natural life.

⁶⁶⁴ *Epistle towards Serapion* 1: 24; G.P. 26: 585 BC.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.* Gal. 1: 4, 6; Rom. 8: 15.

⁶⁶⁶ It is a leap even for God, from being Creator to be Father to what he created; it is a leap into love. The Creator produces out of nothing and He keeps the created one to some distance, by not communicating Himself to the created. The Father gives life out of Himself. The Father commits the full love between Himself and His creatures. The creatures must be both creatures and sons, in order the Father to fully show His love, a love that makes His sons out of the creatures He created out of nothing. The creature must receive the uncreated life, in order the creature to become son of God.

That's why the Word made Himself body" (Jn. 1: 14), in order Him to make the human as receiver of the godhead"⁶⁶⁷. And again: "As the Ghost and the power of the Highest were promised to the apostles, likewise to the Virgin". And the Great Basil asks you to make yourself "through the Holy Ghost, as partaker to the grace of Christ, and you to be son of the light, and you to be imparted with the ternal glory"⁶⁶⁸. And again: "He who is moved through the Holy Ghost with an eternal movement, that one has become wholly saint. This is for, by dwelling the Holy Ghost within him, the man has within himself the worthiness of the prophet, of the apostle, of the angel, of God, while the man was before that dust and ashes" (Gen. 18: 27)⁶⁶⁹. And again: "Not for he takes the servant, he becomes son out of servant, neither for being imparted as a servant he dares to call God as Father"⁶⁷⁰. And again: "The ones according to the image are imparted with the Maker, and this is done through the Ghost. This is because all the created ones are unhappy, because of being deprived of God and of the glory of their Maker, according to the created nature, if they are not imparted with godhead. This is because it is worthless that work about God of him who sees God's being as empty and desert. But neither the creature is so unworthy, nor God is so lacking of power, in order God not to send His holy giving, as a gift, to the creatures"⁶⁷¹. And again: "The creation becomes new again

⁶⁶⁷ The human couldn't become bearer of the godhead as a subject making the godhead as his own, though the godhead is a gift, except he has received, previously, the Hypostasis of the Word Who is Hypostasis of the godhead, as own hypostasis. (Saint Athanasius, *Against Arians* 2: 59; G.P. 26: 273 A). In Christ, the doors of the human have been opened, without the human being destroyed. The godlike light and life entered the human with the whole fullness. This is for, our will by becoming the will of the embodied Word, it no longer resisted the will for cleanness and for love from God. On the opposite, not it is fully collaborating.

⁶⁶⁸ *About the Holy Ghost* 15: 26; G.P. 32: 132 B.

⁶⁶⁹ The Holy Ghost Who has in Himself the eternal life, by dwelling within the believer, the Ghost gives eternal life to the believer too, without beginning and without end, for the Ghost becomes the man's Ghost, as gift, as He is the Ghost of Christ too. Such a man is imparted with a life which he feels it without beginning and without end, for that life is inexhaustible. The man achieved within himself all the dignities which the believer can achieve into Ghost: of prophet, of apostle, of angel or of herald of God, for the man heralds God by irradiating God out of himself. Such a believer become even God, according to grace, for his Subject is the Ghost, or his subject has been penetrated by the Subject of the Ghost. (Pseudo-Basil, *Against Eunomius* 5; G.P. 29: 769 B).

⁶⁷⁰ Not for he has takes a servant as servant-hypostasis, he becomes Son out of servant, but for the Son remains Son even after His embodiment (*Idem, quoted work*, col. 741 B).

⁶⁷¹ Pseudo-Basil, *Against Eunomius* 5; G.P. 29: 724 AB.

when it is imparted with the Ghost, because of the lack of Ghost the creation oldened”⁶⁷². “This is for it must collaborate with the newness from the beginning its renewal and contribution from now. This is for, the Ghost has made again visible the image, for He Who breathed isn’t other from Him Who breathed at the beginning, but He is That One Himself Whom the breath was given through, then together with the soul, not into the soul”⁶⁷³. And Saint John Climacus, when praising the grace of the godlike Baptism, he says: “Then the man was made towards living soul (Gen. 2: 7), and now towards of-life-maker ghost” (1 Cor. 15: 45). There is a big difference. This is for the soul doesn’t give the live to another, but the Ghost doesn’t only live but He also provided that to others too. Thus, the apostles even resurrected people from dead”⁶⁷⁴.

13. These things are exposed in detail by the godlike Cyril too, while rejecting those who say that the godlike instilling was done to the man towards (as) soul. This is for, at the end of his words, he says: “And what was instilled out of Him one understands that that belongs to Him, to his being. So, how could have been the Ghost changes out of God into the nature of the soul? So, the animal was animated by an untold power and through the likeness to Him the animal become what the animals had to be by nature: good, and righteous, and capable of all virtues. But the animal was sanctified by being shown as partaker to the godlike Ghost. This is what the animal lost through sin”⁶⁷⁵. Where are they who say that the deifying grace of the Ghost is a created and natural imitation, and not a godlike and untold work and seeded in an untold manner? This

⁶⁷² *Ibid* 728 A; *About the Holy Ghost* 19: 49; G.P. 32: 157 BC.

⁶⁷³ *Ibid* 729 A. The image requires its relation with the model, a relationship as from person to Person.

⁶⁷⁴ *Homily no. 25 at John 2*; G.P. 59: 150. The Ghost spreads the life out of Himself, within them who want to receive that life, for He is the Ghost of the endless life of God. That’s why the Ghost spreads that life even out of the people whom the Ghost dwells within, for he has imprinted Himself as Subject into their subjects. Out of these people there irradiates the life as it doesn’t irradiate out of the people who are only souly, who have a quenched life within themselves, regardless how intelligent and powerful those people would be in the worldly sense. These people too, they have a certain life within them. But this life is somehow dead and it doesn’t have the power of irradiation, it doesn’t have that ember that irradiates the heat.

⁶⁷⁵ *Against Anthropomorphites 2*; G.P. 76§ 1081 AB. According to Saint Cyril, through the godlike breath, on one hand there were imprinted the moral potentialities of the soul, while on the other hand, the soul was given the possibility of becoming saint. This would mean: the soul became alive. This is because, without the instilling of the godlike and full of life grace, the soul is dead.

is for, Saint Maximos too, he says: “We experience the deification, as being above-nature, but we do not produce the deification”⁶⁷⁶. And again: “Nothing that is according to the nature produced the deification”⁶⁷⁷.

14. But let's turn back where we have started from, and let's take the word further on. So, nothing impedes us to say that as “nobody is good except God” (Mt. 10: 18), likewise nobody is imparted with God except the best amongst angels and those people who receives again within their souls, in a mysterious way, the godlike breath that was removed from Adam because of his disregard related to the godlike commandment. I would gladly ask him who rejects this opinion: isn't totally necessary in order somebody to be imparted with something, him to have within him an impartation from before, and there to be within him something from before? So, those which live through the impartation with God in a sensitive or rational or understanding manner, what feeling would they rejoice of, or of what rationality, or of what mind, until they were imparted with God? Only of existence, somebody could say, as these were added to that. But one shas his existence too, through the impartation with God. it is obvious, therefore, that these ones aren't imparted with God as such, as God's work, but they are said as they are imparted with God as results of God's creator work and power, as also about all the ones produced by some craftsmanship one can say, by an obscure likeness, that all of those are imparted with the skillfulness of the craftsman, but they totally lack his working understanding⁶⁷⁸.

⁶⁷⁶ *Towards Thalassius* 22; G.P. 90: 324 A; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. III, p. 75.

⁶⁷⁷ *Quoted Work* 22; G.P. 90: 321 A.

⁶⁷⁸ Saint Gregory Palamas is specifying here the essential difference between the impartation with God, of the saints, and by and large of all believers and clean people, and the impartation of them or of all things, with God, in their quality as creatures. The saints are imparted with God as Person, in an unmediated manner, namely the saints are in an actual communion with God, while the things are imparted with God's creator work, in their quality as results of God's work. The first one is the impartation with God as such, the last one is the impartation with a God's work. The impartation of the saints is an interpersonal relationship between them and God. This is the leitmotif in the whole teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas, as taken from the biblical and patristical teaching. Better said: as long as on the ground of the human personal creation the things too are the proof of God's creator work, but the things aren't together-conscious-subjects, with God, to a certain work of God, the saints have become themselves as together-subject with God, of God's work. The saint isn't only the result of a creator work of God, but the saint receives and works as God and together with God. In this sense, the saint has become go by grace.

15. The saints, by having as basis, from before, the created nature, they achieve as adding to that the above-nature and godlike impartation, not as a tool produced by a craftsmanship and as the products of that craftsmanship, but like those who have received the science that “is always together-present, but it is shown through works when it is needed”, according to the diverse charismas of the Ghost⁶⁷⁹. “And as the Word is within us, likewise is the Ghost within us”, sometimes as The One Who is Himself within our heart, when “the Ghost confesses together with our shot” (Rom. 8: 16) and when “He shouts out within our hearts: Abba, Father” (Rom. 8: 5; Gal. 4: 6; Mt. 10: 20), and some other times as The One Who speaks through our tongue; for “aren’t you the ones who speak”, says Him Who gave us the uncontradicted wisdom, “but the Ghost of your Father Who lives within you” (Mt. 10: 20)⁶⁸⁰.

But it must be understood as a whole in parts, in the division of the gifts. That’s why “all of us we are limbs to one another” (Eph. 4: 25)⁶⁸¹. In addition to that, “like the power of the sight is in the healthy eye, likewise is the work of the Ghost into the cleaned soul”⁶⁸². That’s why, the same one called the illumination out of the Ghost also as irradiation (flowing =

⁶⁷⁹ Saint Basil, *About the Holy Ghost* 26: 61; G.P. 32: 180 C. It is specified the same difference between the impartation with God’s creator work and the impartation as an unmediated communion with the Person of God. A tool produces by itself the things it has been crafted for. These things aren’t an adding. But the science is something else. The science must be gathered later. The science is added through personal will. Only the persons can enjoy this impartation. Of course, the grace isn’t only a science achieved by the human being. But, in any case, in it is shown that the human being already exists and, on this ground, the human being can become the subject of the work, as grace received from the godlike Subject, for a together-working. Once achieved, the science is like a potentiality which the man can use when ought, according to the diverse needs. So, the science it by that too, an image of the grace, one than can manifest in diverse charismas.

⁶⁸⁰ Here are being made obvious several things: a) both the Word and the Ghost are within us; b) the Word becomes word within us when we wish, or a spring of words, by together-working with us to that, either by speaking to us, or by asking us to speak in order us to answer His appeal; c) the Ghost becomes within us a spring of power of the words, namely also an urge to us to speak out of the Word Who is within us; d) He becomes, in the same time, a spring of life that moves within us and that makes us alive, and He irradiates out of us through words and in all ways. Thus, the words become ours, though they aren’t only ours, and the Ghost Who fills up our words with life, it is ours to such an extent, that when He speaks, we speak; or, when we speak, he speaks. Likewise, His life and power become our live and power.

⁶⁸¹ Saint Basil the Great, *quoted work* 26: 61; G.P. 181 A.

⁶⁸² *Ibid*, 180 C.

ἀπόρροια) of the Ghost⁶⁸³. “This is for, as those which are around the vivid colors, they get colored too, out of that light that is spread out of colors, likewise him who looks openly with the Ghost, he will be transformed out of the glory of That One, and so he will become more luminous, by being lightened by the truth of the Ghost as by a light”⁶⁸⁴. The Gregory who is called the Theologian, when listing up the qualities inherited by sister Gorgonia from people, he says: “I know well that the qualities you have are bigger and way more honored than the qualities form the seen world; the murmur of the ones who celebrate, the paly of the angels, the heavenly good composition, the seeing of the glory, the illumination of the All-High Trinity, cleaner and more consummate than any other, the godhead shining with the whole light into our souls”. And after he said those, by turning towards her, and reiterating on short what he said before: he said: “You enjoyed all of them, whose irradiations you had even on earth, for the sincerity of your heart’s urge towards them”⁶⁸⁵. This is for, this is the irradiation (ἀπόρροιας) *that even when communicated to remain undivided form the one who communicated it, and so it doesn’t suffer any diminution through communication*⁶⁸⁶. This is for, what the light could suffer like, such a thing, because of the ray, or the ray because of tis shininess?

16. Do not bring to me, as proof, the material irradiations. But you remove from that irradiation all the inappropriate meaning, and so you will understand, as much as

⁶⁸³ The Thomist critiques of the teaching which Saint Gregory Palamas defended, from “Istina” Review, 1937, no. 3, they make a big deal of the expression ἀπόρροια, which Saint Gregory Palamas would have taken from Dionysus the Areopagite, and which would prove the Neoplatonic character of this teaching. Behold that the mentioned word was used even by Saint Basil the Great. But this “irradiation” or “flowing”, it doesn’t have nothing Neoplatonic at the holy fathers. This is for, it doesn’t mean else but the presence of God, whole, as Person, in each of His acts, and not a thinning of the divine nature because of the irradiations coming out of the divine nature. Or, if we do not have during our life on earth, in the whole its intensity, the godlike light, this isn’t because of an objective weakening of that light, because of getting far from its source, but that is because of our incapacity of receiving it entirely, as a disciple cannot receive the whole teaching of his magister, though the master puts the same whole zeal of his personality in what he communicated to his disciple. It is, at most, a free accommodation of the imparted gift to the mode and to the capacity of him who received the gift.

⁶⁸⁴ *About the Holy Ghost* 21: 52; G.P. 32: 165 B.

⁶⁸⁵ *Word no. 8, At Gorgonia’s Funeral* 23; G.P. 35: 816 BC.

⁶⁸⁶ Here Saint Gregory of Nyssa is saying, directly, that the “irradiation” doesn’t mean an objective thinning of what is communicated.

possible, the mode the Ghost gives Himself, as a gift, to the worthy ones. How illuminates the Ghost, in an untold manner, to all of them who are worthy? “Like some rays of the sun, he says, which, by illuminating the cloud, they make the cloud illuminating by giving to the cloud a golden color”⁶⁸⁷. You think also at the fact that these clouds, the vessels of the light, they ignite a godlike feeling of that light and, by having by nature some kind of eye capable of being imparted with that light, the clouds can become themselves some kind of light close to the light of the sun, and they can use such a light. Thus, only the saints, for they have become deified and in the likeness of God, they are imparted, in the proper sense, with God. And not only when they not only that are imparted with Him, but they also convey Him. And they know not only the things which happened, but they also know the realities which have never been brought to existence out of nothing. And they not only live, but they even give life, and that is not characteristic to the created power. But after proving the truth, let’s pay attention to the heralders of the truth too, who say that only the saints are imparted with God. This is for, we always present them as witnesses of the truth.

17. So, Basil the Great says: “Only then will be somebody able to come close to our Savior, when he has cleaned himself up of the abomination gathered by him through evilness, and when he has come to that according to nature beauty, and he has given back to his imperial countenance, through cleanness, its ancient shape”⁶⁸⁸. And again: “The Holy Ghost, unapproachable by nature, he makes Himself comprised for goodness. This is for, by filing all the things up, through power, he imparts Himself only to the worthy ones”⁶⁸⁹. “The Ghost

⁶⁸⁷ Pseudo-Basil, *Against Eunomius* 5; G.P. 29: 769 B. Of course, the fathers didn’t have, at their time, the possibility of clearly expressing the report between person and the person’s acts. That’s why they mostly used images taken from nature. But despite that, one can see that the fathers didn’t reckon the irradiations as a diminution. Saint Basil (Pseudo-Basil) didn’t speak about a diminution of the sunrays in report with the sun, but his attention was focused on showing that the sunrays give the could the color of the sun, which in the case of the grace would be, the deification produced in the person whom the grace dwells within, namely the likeness of the person to the godlike Person, as the likeness takes place between two persons who enter a relation and continue that relation.

⁶⁸⁸ *About the Holy Ghost* 9: 23; G.P. 32: 109 AB.

⁶⁸⁹ Something else is the fact that the Ghost fill all the things up through power, and something else is that He imparts Himself in a personal communion. Only the worthy ones are partakers to the last one. He who is imparted with the Holy Ghost in this sense, he becomes a

doesn't impart Himself in the same unique measure, but He imparts His work according to the measure of the faith⁶⁹⁰". And again: "he Who is non-comprised by the world, how must be reckon that He makes Himself seen only to the saints, for the cleanness of their heart, or how many corresponding honors are due to Him?"⁶⁹¹. And again: "The Lord, by providing His disciples with the cleanness of their lives through His teachings, he gives them also to be receivers and seers of the Ghost"⁶⁹². And again: "they who stepped over the earthly things and they have been elevated above those, they have been recognized as worthy of the grace of the Holy Ghost"⁶⁹³.

18. But let's present you the difference between these impartations also through parables, as through certain obscure images. The pot is imparted with fire also after entering its use, the fire from the oven has been removed; for it preserved the traces of the fire. This is for, the vessel has from fire: its color, density, and smooth strength of its matter; this is for, the fire, by drying out the moisture and strengthening and blacking up the vessel, the yellow color of the fire it intertwined with the earthly natural white, and so, out of yellow and white and black there occurs, through their mixing, the color of the burnt kneading, and the tenderness of the earth is tight up, for the pores are being closed from deep, under the power of the fire, so that, by getting thickened, they no longer allow the penetration of the water. So that, what was done through water, from now on, it remains untied and non-moist. And even become way lighter and warmer than the stone, or than the earth, compared to an equal size, by the fact that was close to the fire. This is for, the vessel is imparted with fire also when crafted towards use. But it is imparted also when placed on the hot stove, and it is warmed up by fire or it is in contact with the fire. But then

conscious subject of His work, or together-subject with the Ghost, to that work. He is no longer simply created, and maintained into existence, and guide like an object is. The impartation is personal relation, is communion.

⁶⁹⁰ *Quoted Work* 9: 23; G.P. 32: 108 C. The Holy Ghost communicates His work on the measure of the faith, namely on the measure of a persona attachment to His Person.

⁶⁹¹ *Quoted Work* 22: 53; G.P. 32: 168 C. Within them who are their heart clean of any other affection, or within them who are attached only to Him, He is comprised as Person, for He can establish a personal relation with them, as he cannot establish with anyone.

⁶⁹² *Quoted Work* col. 168 B. The disciples can see the Ghost as Person, for they keep the teachings which they received, namely they fulfill the commandments, and so they unify their will to His will.

⁶⁹³ *Quoted Work* col. 168 C.

the vessel is imparted not only with the results of the fire, but, to some extent, also with all the works of the fire, not lacking either the warmth or the fire's burning power, and the vessel even conveys easily the fire's work, which the vessel is imparted with, to everybody who comes closer, if that one is able to be imparted, though, according to the nature, it is not imparted and it is earth as such. And when the vessel is removed from the oven, the vessel will be imparted with the results of the fire, but not with the fire's works.

19. So, you take, as much as possible, through likeness, from the vessels, the aspects useful for understanding the present theme. The life and the existence, the natural knowledge, and all the ones resembling to these ones, they are results of the godlike work, but they are not works in an actual meaning. The deified life and the grace of them who exist and live in a godlike and above-nature manner, they truly are a godlike and above-nature work, which the union with God is done through, with them who are worthy of God. So, all the realities brought to existence from nothing, by the godlike command, they are created and they are results of the godlike works, but they are not works. And our Lord, by making, together with the Father, Their dwelling place within the worthy ones (Jn. 14: 23), He commits the things occurring into the bearers of God, not through the creator commandment, but through the godlike union and dwelling, through the deifier power, and through the deifier grace, by communicating to them who are united with Him, the traits which are His own by nature. So, the saints are imparted not only with the results, but with themselves the works of God, imitating the angels and the angels' worthiness. This is for, the Great Basil says: "for This One is the holiness by nature, and to them is characteristic to be sanctified through impartation"⁶⁹⁴.

⁶⁹⁴ *Against Eunomius* 3; G.P. 29: 660 B. In the created things and beings, in their quality as created, God isn't seen directly, but only indirectly, as in the results of His work. This is their impartation with God. But within the good angels, and within the believers who strive to clean themselves of all tendencies which are contrary to God, God is seen in an unmediated manner in His actual work, and God even makes them together-subjects to this work. The difference between God in Himself and God within angels and saints, it is only that that in the last ones God is through the impartation of them with Him; they are not saints and gods by themselves, but they are sanctified and deified through the impartation with God. God doesn't need the communion with them in order Him to be God; they need the communion with God in order they to have the godlike life within them. That's why, their created being doesn't cease to remain as created base. This is seen within them and they also see this, despite they have

20. Thus, the saints will shine as our Lord shined on the mountain. And they will have not a created kingdom, neither a kingdom differing in any aspect from our Lord's kingdom, but they will have the same kingdom as His. Thus, Christ lives and speaks here (Gal. 2: 20; 2 Cor. 13: 3), though Paul is the one living and speaking⁶⁹⁵. Thus, Peter kills (Acts 5: 1-10) and he resurrects (Acts 9: 37-42), though God alone is The One Who kills and resurrects. Thus, together with him, on the mountain, James and John see with the bodily eyes too, the non-dusked and non-followed-by-others light (Mt. 27: 1-8; Mk. 9: 2-8; Lk. 9: 28-36), that light that surrounded Paul and later on, by darkening Paul's sight so that it wasn't able to endure the overwhelming of the shininess (Acts 9: 3; 22: 6-11; 26: 13). This is because of not being the body's nature able to see that light. Thus, Stephen looks from on earth at the sky with his body too (Acts 7: 56). And the giving of the Holy Ghost, as gift, it is done by the touch of the human hands (Acts 8: 17), a touch that conveys, to him who come close sincerely and truly, the godlike work and the godlike grace, which, at their turn they are conveyed, by that, to someone else again, and through that one to another, successively, being those extended with the whole time⁶⁹⁶.

become the bearers of godlike characters and works. That's why they participate with their effort of openness, of cleanness, of exclusive attachment to God, of putting their being and will to God's disposition, as an environment which God works through, and themselves become subjects of God's will and work, and they no longer want to work their own. The work of God takes an angelic form, or human, but only for it is noticeable the fact that the angel and the man have put themselves to the disposition of God. That's why, one can notice also the fact that the work of God it exceeds the possible contribution of the created angelic or human work. The angel and the man are ontologically transparent to God, for they are morally transparent.

⁶⁹⁵ The interference between the Person of Christ and the person of the saint it is of such a nature that they cannot be separated, but they cannot be either confounded to one another. On the opposite, the saint is strengthened as person in the union with Christ, but the saint doesn't want to talk about that. Christ lives and speaks as Subject into the saint, but the saint still lives and speaks as subject, but more intensely, into Christ. The live and the speaking of Christ have become of the saint and vice versa. Christ has become the internal subject of the saint's live and speaking, but without making the saint a passive shell, but the saint has become, at his turn, an internal subject of the life and speaking of Christ. Christ involved the saint in His living and work, or, Christ has impropriated the purified living and speaking of the saint, for the saint has identified himself, by his own will, to the will of God. This is a mysterious phenomenon that takes place also between the human persons who fully love one another.

⁶⁹⁶ Only as uncreated power, the grace penetrates all bodies and it can be conveyed through the body too. This fact explains the apostolical succession of the conveying of the grace. Otherwise, it becomes rather a conveying of a "habit" created by the churchly administration,

Who could praise – oh, You the Word of God, oh, You the Only Begotten – the power of Your presence of earth? It is never ignited Your godlike altar by strange and earthly fire. This is for, it is a strange and heavenly fire of another mode, one preserved through the conveying of the unquenched fire which You have come to throw it on earth (Lk. 12: 49), as a borderless ocean, through Your love for people. Your servant ghosts are imparted with that too (Ps. 104: 4⁶⁹⁷), which the demons are chased away through. It is the fire seen by Moses into pyre (Exod. 3: 2) and which Elijah was kidnapped from earth by (4⁶⁹⁸ Kings 2: 11). It is the fire seen by the group of Your apostles too, a fire that starts out of Your Ghost, and by which Paul was engulfed in light and so the persecutor was transformed in disciple (Acts 9: 3 and the followings). This fire is the power of the resurrection and the work of the immortality, the enlightening of the holy souls and the upholding of all rational powers⁶⁹⁹.

But, in order to prove what we said, let's mention here also the manifested signs shown through senses, which have been let aside, for a while. And we are going to do this in order to convince also them who are totally callous in their opinions. This is for he was imparted with life, the servant of the chief of the synagogue (Mt. 9: 25; Mk. 5: 41 Lk. 8: 54-55) and the son

or of a dexterity of exercising the administrative power, or of conveying a juridical power. Of course, in the conveyance of this power that irradiates out of God, Himself the Ghost is working. This is for the grace is an ever-actual work of God Himself. Itself the actual work of the Ghost of Christ irradiates through the human person whom God is working within; by this, the Ghost becomes working also in him whom the work of conveyed, for through work if conveyed the Person of the Ghost Who is the Subject of that work. It was said before, that the soul irradiated full life by the fact that the soul is created. But only if the soul is elevated to that life into grace, the soul will irradiate this life into others too. We also have to take in account also the fact that the Ghost is the Subject too of the works from within Church, given the mysterious connections among the persons who compose the Church. The Ghost is conveyed as working, to a new servant, also by the fact that the conveyer does that in the ambience of the Church, as a servant of Christ in the Church and for the Church; the Ghost is conveyed as working into the subjects from the Church.

⁶⁹⁷ In KJB we have: Ps. 104: 4: "Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:"; in ROB we have: Ps. 103: 5: "You Who make Your angels ghosts and your servant flame of fire". (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁶⁹⁸ In KJB this book is usually called as 2 Kings. (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁶⁹⁹ One could understand from this expression that the godlike fire upholds the angelic powers, but also that that fire upholds, in the healthy work, themselves the soul's rational powers, by elevating those power from the abnormality of the state of sin, of egotistical functioning. Where this fire and its feeling are, the natural power no longer are separated from one another. The rationality works in accord with the love for the harmony with the others. The human being uses his souly powers healthily, fully responsibly.

of the widow (Lk. 7: 14-15), by the touch and by the voice of our Master; they were imparted, Tabitha of Joppe, and the young Eutyches from Troja, this one through the touch of Paul (Acts 20: 10), and those ones through the touch of Peter (Acts 9: 40). What life were those ones imparted with? Not with that of-life-making received by us too, but which our Master wasn't imparted with? Is still there somebody to say that not with the natural and uncreated work are imparted with, the saints? This is for, these ones depriving themselves, by their own free decision, of the work of their nature, they make themselves known only out of grace, and they will be shown so much as being out of That One as much as That God by Nature imparted Himself, through embodiment, with our weakness, by measuring, as only He knows, with His nakedness (kenosis) the deification by grace of the saved ones⁷⁰⁰.

This is for, how could we inherit, otherwise, the Kingdom of God that "is the conveyance through grace of the goods he has by nature?"⁷⁰¹. By having them gathered, whole, within Himself, He shares them and conveys them His glory and shininess, so that they won't be able to know out of themselves, as an air totally lightened by light, or as an unstained intelligible gold burnt into the immaterial and godlike fire. Thus "they have become gods through deification and they are full of the godlike work due to the overwhelming grace of the Ghost, so that through all of them there is a sole work of God and of those who are worthy of God", according to the godlike saying of Maximos, God "crossing them through with kindness, and whole, the worthy one, and whole"⁷⁰².

⁷⁰⁰ As much as He made Himself bearer of our weakness, as much he filled up our weakness with His godlike glory and power. He measured the elevation of our nature with His descent to it. As much as He descended, as God, into the human forms of living and expression, as much He has filled up these forms with the godlike content. As much as the sun enters a chamber, as much the sun fills up that chamber with its light. The beauty of the Emperor's face is inside. In its humbleness and gentle kindness, there are both the descent of God and His height of human form and the height of the human itself. It is a mysterious glory and power of interiority, of intensity, of penetration into the ultimate depth of the souls through humbleness and kindness, which exceed endlessly any glory that wants to impose itself from outside. This means that there is a potential conformity between the authentic human and God, a conformity that is being actualized, through God, in endless dimensions.

⁷⁰¹ Saint Maximos the Confessor, *Gnostic Heads* 2: 90; G.P. 90" 1168 C; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. II, p. 205.

⁷⁰² *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1076 C. There is a perichoresis between God and the worthy ones, as there is among the Persons of the Holy Trinity, and between the two natures of Christ. There is also a perichoresis between the persons who love one another. Or, this perichoresis of the

21. As all the imprintings are imparted with the seal, but each of them moves independently, but, by taking one of them as by glue it to the seal, it will not longer able to move independently, but it will have the same movement with the archetype, by becoming one and the same with the archetype, but the matter remaining different, likewise the godlike image from within us, by ascending to archetype (to the prime model)⁷⁰³, it will be fulfilled that godlike prayer for us: "Give them to be one, as I, Father, into You and You into Me, for they to be one" (Jn. 17: 21) into truth. Thus, he who attaches himself to the Lord, he is ghost" (1 Cor. 6: 17). Thus, the mystery of the union into a body through the touching of the bodies it is truly "great, but into Christ and into Church" (Eph. 5: 32). The seal gives itself to each piece of wax, but each piece of wax is imparted, as much as possible, on the measure of its own power, not only with the traits, but also with the union, in order to be imprinted.

22. Why are you afraid of composition to God, for the fact that also the works are and are called as uncreated? You rather fear not to call God as creature by reckoning His works as natural and created. This is for, Saint John Damascene, when speaking about the two works into Christ, he says that "the created one will show the created nature, and the uncreated one will characterize the uncreated being. This is for, the natural ones must be corresponding to their nature"⁷⁰⁴. And in accord to this, Saint Maximos says: "If there were abolished the natural will and the existential work of the godlike being and of the human being, how could He be both God and man"⁷⁰⁵. And,

love is present in all kinds of perichoreses. In Trinity the perichoresis is due to the unity of being among the non-confounded Persons; within Christ, the perichoresis is due to the unity as Person in two non-confounded natures; and between God and the worthy ones, the perichoresis is due to the unity of work amongst non-confounded persons, so that the work of God becomes, through impartation, also work of the saints. God moves Himself with His work within the saints, and the saints moves themselves through the same work - as become their work too - into God. The Subject of Christ dwell actively in the interior of the human person and the human person dwell, actively, into the Person of Christ. Christ has impropriated the work of the man, and He sanctified that work, and the man has impropriated the work of God, and he humanized that work, but it has preserved it in its measures, in its above-nature qualities.

⁷⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁴ *The Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3: 15; G.P. 95: 1050 C. The same idea at Maximos the Confessor, *Dialogue with Pyrrhus*, G.P. 91: 341 A.

⁷⁰⁵ *The Explanation of the Motion*, G.P. 91: 121 D.

are not uncreated also the hypostatical characters of the All-High Trinity, though they are many? How, then, there aren't several gods, or how isn't The One composed because of those? I am afraid that you introduce to us a totally lacking-of-being God and non-hypostatical. But you say in everything, that these ones are the same with the being of God, and you reckon God as One and undivided in all aspects, because of not understanding that God multiplies Himself while still remaining One and He divides Himself in an undivided manner and He imparts Himself in diverse ways, while He is totally uncut and he remains non-existed from His unity, through an above-being power⁷⁰⁶.

23. You tell me: doesn't have, also each hypostasis, several hypostatical characters? For the Father is non-caused and causing, proceeding and birth-giver. But the Father has all of these in an uncreated way. So, do you reckon the hypostatical characters as totally one and the same thing with the hypostasis, as you also do not admit any difference between

⁷⁰⁶ "He is multiplied while remaining One" etc. Saint Gregory Palamas is expressing here a supple, dialectical thinking, about God as Person, unlike the alternatives which exclude one another, in a simplistic manner: or One without any difference in His manifestations, or composed. The Person is One but free to manifest Himself, towards other persons, in different ways and on the measure of noticing power of them whom the Person manifests to, but the Person always remains whole and the Person makes Himself known wholly the same, but differently, revealed in His whole unity and hidden in his whole unity. Akindynos affirmed: nothing uncreated can "flow", because of reckoning that any manifestation if a "flowing"; on the opposite, what is created flows also as essence, not only as work (See the quoted study belonging to J. S. Nadal, S. J., in: "Istina Review", p. 367). He didn't know the difference between person and works, as Nadal who defended Akindynos, he didn't know it as well. A person is maintained in her/his indestructible and mysterious unity without being dissolved in her/his irradiations, as it happens to the things (that's why the person is eternally maintained even in hell, far from God). Just because of that, the person's manifestations aren't involuntary flowing, which the person is gradually dissolved through, or which the person is transformed in something else, but they are willing manifestations, which the person at will, while the person still remains the same. The more a person manifests herself/himself, the more that person is enriched in her/his unity, or that person is intensified in her/his unity. This is true even in the case of the human persons who are limited by their created character. Or, just through manifestations, the person proves her/his inexhaustible and unweakened unity. Akindynos condemned God to the impossibility of manifestation because of the fact that God is uncreated. This gives in the essentialist, non-personalistic conception about God. Only such a mentality could affirm that, because of being uncreated, God is so hard in His essence that he cannot manifest Himself, understanding the manifestation as a flowing. The uncreated was equal, to Akindynos, to petrification. The God of Akindynos and Barlaam, or the scholastic God, it is a rigid and dead substance of a philosophy simplistically rationalistic. The God of the Bible of the Fathers, of the believers, as affirmed by Palamas, He is a God Who is a Person, living, free of manifesting His interest and His love.

the natural ones (works) and the nature, and between the essential ones (works) and essence? Will you, therefore, call as hypostasis the hypostatical ones (the characters), as you have called as nature the natural ones (the works), in a synonymic manner, and not in a homonymic manner? But the Church Fathers do not do that way. They call those as en-hypostatical (being into hypostasis), but not hypostasis, as they also do not call these ones as being, but, in a proper sense, into being⁷⁰⁷. Besides, once around each one of the hypostases there are many and diverse hypostatical (characters), how could be the hypostasis and the hypostatical (the hypostatical character) one and the same thing? So, once there are shown many and diverse hypostatical (characters), according to your too twisted and fickle understanding, there would be many gods and each hypostasis, in the godlike ones, it will be composed. Thus, you who have self-ordained as the defender of the above-mind simplicity, you have shown us the road towards a composed God.

24. But if the component works of those which subsist in themselves aren't contemplated in another – this has been a common dogma of the philosophers from outside and since the beginning – nothing of what exists will ever be said that it composes with the own work⁷⁰⁸. This is for, neither the burning

⁷⁰⁷ “ενυπόστατα, ἀλλ οὐχ υπόστασιν... οὐχ οὐσία ἀλλ ἐνούσια”. The hypostatical characters belong to the hypostasis, they have their basis into hypostasis, but they are not the hypostasis itself. This is for, if we said that the hypostasis is the unborn, in abstract, the mystery of the person would be dissolved into something of impersonal, pantheistic character. It would be likewise, if the features and the works were confounded to the being, the being would be attracted out of its unfathomable mystery, into the order of the realities which are submitted to the rational categories. That's why the Fathers said that the being of God is beyond the infinity, beyond the eternity, and beyond all the other features of it. “God is for infinite times infinitely above the existing realities, both of the shareable and non-shareable ones... All the immortal realities and itself the immortality, all the living ones and itself the life, all the holy realities and the holiness itself, all the virtuous realities and the virtue itself, all the good realities and the goodness itself, all the existing realities and the existence itself, all of those are things of God... God is above the being of all of them who are cogitated and named” (Saint Maximos the Confessor, *Gnostic Heads* 1: 49-50; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. II, pp. 140-141). Palamas, following to the Eastern Fathers, he sees the indefinite mystery of the Person as beyond all His impartable manifestations. This is for, Palamas reckons, as the Eastern Fathers did, that the being exists only as Person, for the person is the mode of real and eternal existence of the being (τρόπος την υπάρξεως).

⁷⁰⁸ The works which compose the ensemble of the manifestations of some self-standing units, those works do not give a composed character to those units, for they are not contemplated as existing in other units too, but in one and the same. And one doesn't say about any existing unit that that unit is composed because its own work.

power makes composed the source of the warmth, neither the ray makes the light composed. This fantasy belongs to you, because of preaching the total indistinction of The Uncreated One, threefold in hypostasis. This is for, by being many the uncreated realities, they are one, in the same time, and each of them is en-hypostatical (it subsists in hypostasis) and, in this sense, it is self-hypostatical. And the natural works and the hypostatical characters, by being many, they converge in one, for none of them is in hypostasis as self-hypostatical⁷⁰⁹, it neither have been before, nor it will be after, neither it is possible to subsist in another certain essence, as belonging to its nature⁷¹⁰.

25. And anything that is composed from diverse essences, either by merging, or by unmixed union, which are contemplated in several hypostatical characters of a hypostasis, but in each of them not as several full hypostases but only one, because of, otherwise, it would no longer be one and because it isn't composed. And this one it differs through the facts that either is from diverse essences, or it is from an essence and from the ones which are contemplated in Him as in a support, and by that there are essential and opposite differences. But not only through this ones, but also by the fact that they are innate to some different essences, and due to them, all the created realities will endure changes by growth and diminution, by assimilation and rejection, by working and by suffering, and so it suffers also the loss of some of them who existed together.

⁷⁰⁹ The works do not compose the unit which they belong to, because they do not exist in it as some own hypostases, self-standing, but they exist into the respective hypostasis (οὐδὲν τούτων ἐν υποστάσει ὡς αὐτοπόστατο ἐστίν). The common hypostasis brings to unity the works or the manifestations of a unit. It is the same mystery of the indestructible unity of a person, a unity that keep in non-composed unity all the person's manifestation. The works cannot be detached from the person, but the person is in them as continuous spring and base of them, the works show the unity of the whole in all its manifestations. The work is also called as self-hypostatical for it doesn't irradiates out of another hypostasis.

⁷¹⁰ By saying now that they are not in another essence (οὐδὲ ἐν ἑτέρᾳ οὐσίᾳ), after he said that they are in hypostasis, Saint Gregory shows that the natural works do not come out of being contemplated outside the hypostases. It springs out only from that being that subsists, really, in the three hypostases. Even here, he is saying that "it doesn't subsist in another essence", namely it is in that essence that subsists in hypostasis. But it is not a manifestation that was before or that it will always be the same, as a hypostasis. If it was so, it would mean to be identified to the hypostasis or to the essence. The works come from and they withdraw into hypostasis. They are various. But their unity is provided by the unity of the being or of the hypostasis that is the spring and the basis of all the ones which it can potentially comprise and it actually manifests.

Thus, they prove to be submitted also to a full decomposition. And everything that decomposes itself, it is, necessarily, composed too.

26. But at God, by existing only one undivided essence, there is no diminution, neither is there growth, nor is there adding, neither is there loss; so, there is neither division, which would make obvious the composition from before⁷¹¹. And “as many as God has”, in order I to use the words of Athanasius the Great, “He has them through Himself, and not as they would have been achieved by Him”⁷¹². And He has them only as working, and not as He would have suffered through them⁷¹³. That’s why God is totally outside opposition, an opposition that would cause Him a transformation. Himself, amongst all realities, is the only One having no essential differences, but He has works, as we showed before. Due to those works, all the realities are submitted to Him, as matter, and even the understanding ones, they are submitted to Him Who bears all realities with His word, better said with His will, namely to Him Who bears them through His atemporal, untired, and non-suffering work⁷¹⁴. But neither one could see ever, something of

⁷¹¹ So, Saint Gregory Palamas is rejecting here the idea that was attributed to him and that still is attributed him today by a part of the Catholic scholastics, that, by admitting the uncreated energies, he would admit a diminution of the divine essence into these energies, in a Neoplatonic sense. This would be the case only if God was understood as impersonal substance. In such case, the admission of the diminution couldn’t be avoided except by affirming, as in the scholastic theology, the absence of any manifestation of that substance, based on the fact of being uncreated. A substance that irradiates out of itself, it will gradually decompose, in order to recompose itself into another substance, or, might be, to recompose again in itself, as in theosophy and anthroposophy. Actually, this is a vision characteristic to any pantheism. The faith in God as Person, it avoids understanding God as a petrified substance, one lacking any manifestation, as also the decomposition through irradiation. The unity of the Person is of such a nature that, though it doesn’t remain closed rigidly in itself, it won’t decomposed itself through irradiation, neither it will compose itself with its manifestations.

⁷¹² Unidentified place.

⁷¹³ Here to, we can see that god is considered as consummate Person. This is for the person manifests herself/himself as freely working, and not as suffering unwillingly, a flowing, one that would diminish and it would compose the person, so that the person to suffer essential modifications produces upon that person, from outside, or by an internal law. The created herself/himself person is called to reach the dispassion into God, out of the mix of activity and passivity.

⁷¹⁴ In the working and totally non-passive character of God (here it is justified the expression: *Deus is actus purus*, but not in the sense that He would be always the same act and He would not be Person, a spring of His totally dispassionate acts) it is shown, by excellence, the free character of God as Person. And in this is shown the fact that God is not submitted to any

the ones belonging to God, as belonging, by nature, to someone else from among all the other ones. And this is for, that that belongs to God as to Him Who is the Only One working through them⁷¹⁵. “This is for, nobody, he says, is good, except God (Mk. 10: 18), “the blessed and the Only Master, the only One Who has immortality, dwelling into the unapproachable light” (1 Tim. 6: 15,16). Where there you bring out from, the suspicion about the composition of God out of different natures, once He always manifests Himself unitarily?⁷¹⁶ And among the Three Hypostases Each One is consummate and different, in that untold and above-all-mind-and-word union. No one could contrive that each Hypostasis stays by Himself, without the others, and so, from that, to follow a composition. “This is for, I do not reach, he says, to understand with my mind, how am I enlightened by One through Three”. So, the union and the consummation of the Three Hypostases rejects, here too, the composition.

27. Consequently, you must understand and defend the godlike simplicity, but without abolishing His natural out comings, as they wouldn't exist, and neither you to reckon the without-evening and eternal light, as begun, nor you to affirm two godheads and two godlike origins of the good, namely created and uncreated. This is because, only thus there actually would be two of them. This is because, by being both of them created, both the being and the work, there is no hindrance they both to be one, as there are the ray and the sun a sole light. Neither will you reckon that the godhead and the Kingdom of God would be created. This is for, these ones are works of

composition or fatal “flowing” (involuntary irradiations), which would diminish Him and take Him to decomposition. God is so strong and free in His quality as worker, so that He does and upholds all realities, when he wills, with His word, and He has not to make any effort in order to overcome some resistance, or some power which would oppose Him.

⁷¹⁵ The realities which do not have by nature some feature that is characteristic to God, they do not work only through that, as God does. The features of God represent, therefore, the modes of His essential work; they represent God's character as Person, by excellence active, non-passive, and so uncomposed, as exclusively working from Himself, and not helped or pushed from outside or from inside.

⁷¹⁶ Saint Gregory Palamas is affirming here what we have noticed repeatedly: God Who manifests Himself unitarily in all realities, He is not composed, for He is the Person by excellence Who doesn't lose His unity by manifesting Himself, but He reveals His unity by doing so. In all God's works He is felt as the same whole Subject working.

The unitary manifestation means That One and the Same as Person, He is present in all His manifestations. And this absence of the composition at Him, it results out of His quality as consummate Person.

God⁷¹⁷. Neither will you lower the deifier grace on the level of the creature, so that you won't lower together with the grace Him also Who has the grace by nature and Who provides the grace. Neither will you show as a lie the fact that the Son of God has made Himself as we are. This is because, how would have Him deigned to make Himself as we are, for us, if He hadn't imparted us with the Holy Ghost, but with a creature, or, better said, if he hadn't given us the ghost of the adoption in exchange for the human body, a body that He took it out of the Virgin, so that he has made Himself man?⁷¹⁸ Neither will you make as dwellings of the creatures on them who are churches of God, namely the saints; nor will you make yourself so unblessed, so that you will not only abstaining yourself from the godlike and deifier impartation, but, tragically, you even rejecting the hope in it. Neither will you make God so helpless, so that He couldn't give, as gift, His holy impartation to His cleaned rational creatures. Better said, you won't make God as lacking a being and as lacking hypostases. By saying that He is, in all regards, one and the same with His works, which are, by themselves, non-existential and non-hypostatical, namely neither essences nor hypostases⁷¹⁹. Neither will you make shareable the essence of God, for that essence is above-essence and it is above-name and it is, in itself, non-shareable and non-manifested, because you would call as essence everything that exists. Neither will you appear like another Eunomius, by doing like he did and calling all of the hypostatical ones (the characters), as

⁷¹⁷ Saint Gregory Palamas is naming here, according to the example of Dionysus the Areopagite, also the work of God, namely also His light, as the His Kingdom and His godhead, for within them God shows Himself as Person, but also because himself the being of God is above any name.

⁷¹⁸ Actually, if Christ hadn't given us the uncreated Ghost, He wouldn't have given the Ghost either to His human nature, or to His body. Then the embodiment wouldn't have been committed, except only in a Nestorian sense. The divine nature and the human nature have remained fully separated into Christ. Or, all the wonderful deeds worked through the body they are supra-natural works, but created by Christ as God in His humanity. By and large, the catholic conception about the miraculous phenomena, as phenomena produced by the created supra-natural grace, it tied the miraculous phenomena magically to the nature, and it doesn't reckon them as manifestation of the direct power of God.

⁷¹⁹ One of the consequences resulting out of the theory of Barlaam and Akindynos, it is that too, that if the works of God had been one and the same with His essence and hypostases, because these ones aren't by themselves either essence or hypostases, it would have been annulled both the essence and the hypostases of God. And this means, simply, that God wouldn't have existed. A God Who had been unworking, it would have been a helpless God – and therefore an inexistent God.

uncreated, as the being of God, under the pretext of the godlike simplicity. Neither will you become a Monothelite by making the godlike nature from within Christ as deprived of work. Neither another Sabellius, by reckoning, in another manner, the names of God as empty of realities, as some names which would mean, all of them, the same things, namely only essence. Let yourself not to endure all of these, by calling the works of God as created and, through empty contrivances, you to showing God's simplicity as no longer being anything. And let yourself believe in the same God, divided and undivided, united in division and distinct in union, not gone out from Himself in outgoings, and always moving Himself in motionlessness, dividing Himself undividedly, and sharing Himself whole as the sunray does.

28. But let's get again to the core of the things, he who preaches God as One and simple, let him be clear as Basile the Great was, who said: "How won't be non-composed Him Who is simple according to His being? This is for, not the modes which show what he actually is, not those alter the rationality of His simplicity. This is because, thus, all the things said about God, they will show us God as composed. And from here will follow that, if we want to save the idea of God's simplicity and non-division, we will have either not to say anything about God, except that He is uncreated, and to abstains ourselves from calling God as incorruptible, unchangeable, creator, judge, and all the ones which we are accepting now in theology, or, in the alternative that we accept the names, what will we do? Will we make all of them as being? But then we will no longer show Him only as composed, but we will even say about His that He is composed out of unressembling parts, for the motif that by each name is indicated something else and something else"⁷²⁰.

29. When you hear us, therefore, saying that something else is the being and something else is the work, you will understand that something else and something else we call what is signified by each of these, again as the Great Basil said. And again: "If we took as part of the being the unbegottenness, then would have some room the word that the composition consists of different parts. But if we understand through the being of God the light, or the life, or the good, the whole that is being the life, and the whole that is being the light, and the whole that is being the good, namely the life or the

⁷²⁰ *Against Eunomius* 2; G.P. 29: 640 B C.

unbegottenness, how will be non-composed Him Who is simple according to His being?”⁷²¹. And he again says towards the heretics who were saying towards him: so, what you are telling us, it is that God is simple and everything that you count out of Him is a known part of His being: “this is a sophism comprising tens of thousands of insanities. If there are so many counts, are those names of the being and they have no meaning?”⁷²². And again: “One must know that we do name the greatness of God and His power and His wisdom, and not His being Itself”⁷²³. But when you hear us saying that something else is the being and something else is the power or the work of God, you know that that we are saying about this one, for the power and the work of God are somewhat known, but the being of God is known to nobody.

30. But the Lord of the knowledge, and Who teaches the knowledge to the man, and Who gives the wisdom as a gift, and Who straightens the wise one, “into Who there are hidden all the treasures of the wisdom and of the knowledge” (1 Col. 2: 3), “let Him give you the ghost of the wisdom and of the unveiling into His knowledge, by enlightening the eye of your heart, in order you to see which is the hope of His calling and which is the richness of the glory of inheriting Him into saints, and which is the overwhelming greatness of His power towards you who believe according to the work of His power, which He worked it into Christ” (Eph. 1: 17-20), “in The One Who can make, through His power that is working within us, way more

⁷²¹ *Ibid.* Through the introducing sentence of this quote, and through the quote itself, Saint Gregory Palamas wants to say: if we referred each name only to a part of the being, it would be justified the accusation that we make the being of God as composed. But if we refer each name to a work, but we see working in that work the whole hypostatized being, this accusation won't be justified any longer. P. Hristou (in the edition of the work of Palamas, tome I, p. 162, note no. 2), he deduces from here, as being unjust, the accusation formulated by the Catholic theory, referring to the fact that Palamas would consider the being of God as composed, through the difference Palamas makes between being and energy. This is for, according to him, the different names indicate only manifestations of an undivided being. The fact is that Palamas sees in each manifestation the presence of the whole divine being, but Palamas doesn't see, though, the being as exhausted in any manifestation. Each name signifies a work, but the signified work isn't separated from the whole being, but the whole being is present in what is signified, but the being is not exhausted in that. If through each name we indicated the being, because of each name meaning something else, they would indicate part of the being, and, if that had been the case, the being would have been composed.

⁷²² *Epistle no. 234* :1; G.P. 32: 868 C.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*

than the ones which we ask for, or which we think at” (Eph. 3: 20). Who it is due the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Hagiorite Tome

For them who live with holiness in quietude. In order to clarify them who, because of their inexperience, and because of their disobedience to the saints, they reckon the mysterious works of the Ghost, which are worked within them who live according to the Ghost, in an above-word manner, and which are shown through deeds and not only proven in words.

The dogmas uttered today and which are known, by and large, to everyone, they were mysteries of the Law given through Moses, foreseen only by prophets, into Ghost. And the goods promised to the saints for the future age, they are mysteries of the living according to the Gospels, given and shown in advance, them who have been found worthy of seeing into Ghost, and to those ones, with measure, as an earnest. But, as during the Law, if some Jew didn't listen, with thankfulness, to the prophets who were saying that the Word and the Ghost of God are together-eternal and from before ages, and so he covered his ears because of reckoning that he was hearing words forbidden by the right-faith and opposite to the faith as confessed by the right-worshippers, which said: "Your Lord God is One Lord", likewise will happen to somebody nowadays, if he doesn't listen, with piousness, when one speaks about the mysteries of the Ghost, which are known only to them who have been cleaned by virtue.

And again – like the end of those foretellings it showed the mysteries from then as matching the mysteries discovered later on, and now we believe into the Father, into the Son, and

into the Holy Ghost, a Godhead in Three Hypostases, a sole nature, simple, non-composed, uncreated, unseen, and above-cogitation – likewise, when will be unveiled, at the appropriate time, in the future age, at the untold showing of God Who is in Three Hypostases, consummate, the mysteries which are being preached nowadays will be shown, plainly, to everyone.

We must take in account also the fact that, though the threefold hypostatical Trinity of the godhead, unweakened by the rationality of the unity, It later showed Itself to the whole earth, the prophets knew It exactly, even before the fulness of time. And they who listened to the prophets, they accepted that easily. Likewise, they won't remain unknown, either to us, the meanings of the things daringly preached, and which have been shown, in advance, and mysteriously, into Ghost, if we are worthy of that. This is for, some people knew those by their own experience, namely all of them who rejected, for the sake of the living according to the Gospel, the wealth of the goods, the glory form the people, and the lacking of beauty pleasures of the body; and not only that, but they even strengthened that rejection by obeying them who reached the fulness of the age of Christ (Eph. 4: 13). The last one, occupying themselves, through appeasement, in a worriless manner, with themselves and with God, and, through lean prayer, by reaching themselves, and, through the mysterious union - that above-mind union – with God, and by being they elevated into God, they knew the above-mind realities. And they who obeyed such saints, they knew God by trusting and loving the saints whom they obeyed to⁷²⁴.

Thus, us too, by listening to the Great Dionysus, who speaks about this in his *Second Epistle towards Gaius*, we believe that “the deifier gift of God is deification, godlike origin and the origin of the good, but God Who gives this gift to the worthy ones, He is above this godhead”⁷²⁵. This is because God doesn't experience multiplication, neither one affirms, by that,

⁷²⁴ They who are elevated, after they have been freed of passions, through clean prayer, at God, they live, even from now, the goods of the future age promised through the dogmas of the Church.

⁷²⁵ Dionysus the Areopagite, *Epistle towards Caius*. G.P. 3: 936 B. Palamas calls as godhead the deifier grace too, as willed irradiation out of Godhead. But God as Person, though he is in this deifier gift, for Himself whole produces the deification, He still isn't exhausted in this gift as work. As such, God is above that.

two godheads⁷²⁶. But the godlike Maximos, when writing about Melchisedec, he says that this deifier grace of God, it is uncreated and always existing out of God Who is always existent⁷²⁷. And he calls it, in other places, for many times, as unborn and an-hypostatical light (subsistent into hypostasis), one that is shown to the worthy ones, when they are found worthy, as that is not like a light coming then to existence⁷²⁸. This saint calls that light also as the light of the untold glory and the cleanness of the angels. And Makarios the Great calls it as the nourishment of the bodiless ones, the glory of the godlike nature, the beauty of the future age, godlike and heavenly fire, untold and mental light, the earnest of the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. 1: 22), and sanctifier oil of the gladness (Ps. 44: 8⁷²⁹).

So, anyone who places among Messalians and who call as Ditheists (worshippers of two gods), on them who reckon this deifier grace of God as uncreated, unborn, and en-hypostatical, let them know that they are opposing the saints of God and they will remove themselves from the group of them who will be saved, if they do not repent; and they will even fall from the One and Only by nature God Who is worshipped by the saints. And anyone who believe and who listen and who speak together with the saints, and who do not contrive reasons out of sins, and who do not reject as non-knower that what is told in an unveiled manner, but without knowing the kind of the mystery, let them not disregard searching for and trying to learn from them who know. This is for, they will find out that nothing is opposite to the godlike words and things, and this in the necessary realities which nothing could exist without, neither will be there any godlike mystery.

Everybody who argues that the consummate union with God is done only by imitation and by natural urge, without the

⁷²⁶ Just because God doesn't experience multiplication, He is whole too in His deifier grace, as Person, and this grace can be called as godhead without affirming, by that, that there would be two godheads.

⁷²⁷ *Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1141 B.

⁷²⁸ The grace called by Saint Maximos the Confessor as light having its basis into hypostasis, by having its foundation and its starting place in the godlike hypostases, it has, by that, an objective subsistence. So, it is not created out of nothing, neither it is a subjective hallucination, but it has been existing from ever, as the godlike hypostases have been existing too. It is a personal irradiation of God.

⁷²⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 45: 8: "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad."; in ROB we have: Ps. 44: 10: "The myrrh and the aloe embalm Your vestments; out of ivory palaces lute songs gladden You."

deifier grace of the Ghost, as between them who have the same habits and who love on one another, and they reckon the deifier grace of God as a habit of the rational nature, one that is achieved only by imitation but not through above-nature illumination and through godlike work seen in an unseen manner by them who have been made worthy, and understood in an non-understood manner, let that one know that he has fallen into the straying of the Messalians, without realizing it. This is for, the deified one would have been, necessarily, God by nature, if the deification had been made through a natural power and if it has been comprised amongst the borders of the nature⁷³⁰.

That's why, let not one like this to try and imprint his crooked cogitation into them who cogitate rightly, and so him to plant the defilement into them who are undefiled into faith, but, by rejecting his thought, let him learn from the experienced ones, or from them who have been taught by the experienced ones, that the gift of the godhead is totally untied (to the created realities), not being in nature any power capable of producing it, because, if that had been the case, it wouldn't have been grace, but a manifestation of a work of a natural power. On the other hand, what had been done, it wouldn't have been a wonderful thing, if the deification had been produced through a power of the nature capable of deification. The deification would have been, in such a case, a result of the nature and not a gift from God. And one who have reached the deification in such circumstances, he could have been called as god by nature, in a proper senses.

But that power according to the nature of each one amongst existences, it is not something else but a non-deviated movement of the nature towards the work. But, if that had been the case, what the godhead would have got out of itself the deified one, if the godhead had been comprised within the limits of the nature – that I cannot understand...

Therefore, the grace of the deification is above-nature, above virtue, and above-knowledge, and all of these are,

⁷³⁰ *The Hagiorite Tome*, composed by Saint Gregory Palamas as an abstract of his writings against Barlaam, it accuses Barlaam and them who think as he did, of what Barlaam accused the hesychasts, namely of Messalianism. This is because, the Messalians, by reckoning that they saw the being of God as a natural light, they actually were pantheists, as pantheist is him too, who reckons as Barlaam did, that the godhead is a habit produced through the created power of the human being.

according to the godlike Maximos, endlessly lower than the grace. This is for the whole virtue and imitation of God by our powers, it makes him who have those, to be worthy of the godlike union. But only the grace does, in a mysterious manner, itself this untold union. This is for, through grace, God Himself enters whole, in the worthy ones who are whole, and the saints enter whole, in God Whole⁷³¹, taking God within themselves, and achieving God only, as some kind of rewards for their climbing towards Him. This is for God penetrates in them like the soul into body, as in His limbs, and so God makes them worthy they to be within Him.

Everybody who argues that are Messalians they who say that the mind is placed within heart, or within brain, let him know that he sinfully wages war to the saints. This is because, Athanasius the Great says that the rational part of the soul is placed within the brain. And Makarios, who doesn't lack anything of the greatness, he places the work of the mind within heart. These two are agreed by almost all the saints. This is for, what the godlike Gregory of Nyssa says, that the mind is neither inside nor outside the body, for the mind is incorporeal, it doesn't oppose to the other saints' affirmations. This is for, those say that the mind is within body, as one that is united with the body. So, by saying this from another perspective, they do not differ at all from that one. This is for, neither him who says that the Word of God dwelled yore within the virginal and undefiled womb, he doesn't oppose another who says that the

⁷³¹ Δι αυτής γάρ ολοισ ο Θεος περιχορει, ολοι δέ ολω τω Θεω περι χωρουσιν. God Whole makes His "perichoresis" in the worthy ones, and these ones whole make their "perichoresis" in God Whole. Namely, God Whole moves Himself in the wholeness of the worthy ones, and the worthy ones move with the wholeness of their being into God Whole. Nothing remains stranger to them, into God, and nothing from them remains outside God. But this means that neither the movement remain separated, but the movements interpenetrate one another. In the motion of the human nature there it moves the divine nature too, and in the motion of the divine nature it moves the human nature too, so that it is done a sole movement, without confounding the human to the divine, alike the combined movement of the soul and of the body. Saint Gregory Palamas is affirming here too, clearly, the union between God as Person with the worthy ones as persons. Only the persons unite entirely with one another, while, the receiving by a person of something material it is limited to that part received by that person. Without any doubt, the persons, by uniting with one another entirely, they still do not exhaust all their depths in this union, though all those depths are touched by the union. The persons remain to one another, eternally, as reserves of power and of reciprocal giving. But the person is whole, though, on all levels that person communicates herself/himself to another person. The person gives herself/himself wholly, while remaining whole in herself/himself, as an inexhaustible reserve of giving.

godhead isn't in a place or it is incorporeal. This is for, that one cogitates about the Word that the Word united Himself above-word, with our dough, for His untold love for people⁷³².

Everybody who says that the light that shined to the disciples on Mount Tabor, it is a fantom and a symbol that is done and undone, and that doesn't really exist⁷³³, and he argues that that light isn't an above-all-understanding work, but it is below-understanding, he surely opposes the witness of the saints. This is because, the saints either in speeches or in writings, they call that light as untold, uncreated, eternal, atemporal, unseen by angels and by people, the archetypal⁷³⁴ and unchanged beauty, the glory of God, the glory of Christ, the glory of the Ghost, the ray of the godhead, and so on. For the body is glorified, he says, by receiving Him, and the glory of the godhead becomes the glory of the body. But the glory was unshown in the seen body, to them who weren't able to receive the realities which are unseen even to the angels⁷³⁵. Therefore,

⁷³² The present tome doesn't take a side, either of those saying that the mind is within heart, not of those saying that the mind is within brain. Even more than that, it doesn't reject either the more spiritual opinion of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, according to whom the mind isn't either inside or outside the body. Palamas admits the mysterious and complex character of the connection between soul and body. And just because of that, he didn't take a simplistic and unilateral position. He doesn't join the opinion that the soul is exclusively outside the body, not he joins the opinion that the soul is within body as any other part of the body. One must admit a certain presence of the soul within body. But this presence is different from a material presence of a body's part. It is a presence within body, but it is an incorporeal presence; it is a presence within body, but this presence is above-understanding.

⁷³³ Here the symbol isn't taken in the meaning of a sensitive permanent reality which something insensitive is shown through, but it is reckoned as a seen image passingly "materialized" (we haven't been able to find another equivalent term for the Romanian *înfiripat*, but we are queenly aware of the fact that "materialized" is mostly inadequate; neither it would be appropriate the term "concretized" (E. l. t.'s n.)) by God for something unseen. The godlike light shown on Tabor isn't the image of something unseen, for itself is something above-sight in the material sense, for itself has a spiritual character, for it is an unmediated irradiation out of God; it is 'seen' in an unseen manner, it is understood in a non-understood manner. It is a manifested presence of God, a presence perceived by a "feeling" of the understanding, but one that is not fully understood.

⁷³⁴ "The archetypal beauty", That light, though doesn't have a material form, it is not something amorphous, disorganized, but it is felt within it a superior harmony, a plenitude of goods, and, therefore, it is very beautiful, it is even the model of beauty of all the seen beauties.

⁷³⁵ It is about the body of Christ, that receives a harmony from its forming through the Hypostasis of the Word full of Holy Ghost. In the harmony of the body of Christ, it can be seen the glory of God. But the harmony, the beauty, and the glory of the body of Christ, they were unseen by those who didn't have spiritual eyes. Of this consisted the humbleness or the descent or the kenosis of the Word, one covering His body too. It wasn't forcedly imposed,

Christ transfigured Himself not by receiving what he didn't have, neither by transforming Himself in what He wasn't, but he unveiled to His disciples what he was, by opening their eyes and by making them seers out of blind⁷³⁶. This is for, by remaining the Same He made Himself seen to His disciples, by showing Himself unlike He showed Himself before. For He is the true light (Jn. 1: 9), the beauty of the glory. "And he shined like the sun". This comparison is unworthy of Him, because it is impossible the uncreated to totally be expressed by using created things.

Everybody who says that only the being of God is uncreated, but not His eternal works too, which he exceeds all of them, as One who works on what he works, let him hear Saint Maximos who says: "All the immortal realities and the immortality itself, all the living realities and the life itself, all the saint realities and the holiness itself, all the virtuous realities and the virtue itself, all the good realities and the goodness itself, all the existing realities and the existence itself, they obviously are things of God. But some of them started existing in time (for there was a time when they didn't exist), while others didn't start existing in time. For there wasn't a time when there wasn't virtue, or kindness, or holiness, or immortality"⁷³⁷. And again: "The goodness and everything that is comprised in the meaning of the goodness, and simply: the whole life, the immortality, the simplicity, the unchangeability, the limitlessness, and all the realities which are existentially contemplated around God, they are things of God, but which didn't start in time. For, there hasn't ever been something more ancient than the virtue, neither more ancient than any of the mentioned things we have mentioned above, even though the realities which are imparted with them started existing in time. This is for, any virtue existed before time started existing, for the virtue has God from ever, as sole spring of His existence. But God is elevated for infinite times infinite above all

but it was unveiled only to them who entered, by faith, the communion with Him. How often are we experiencing the beauty of a good-looking person only when entering the communion with that person!

⁷³⁶ The seeing of the above-nature light through the humanity of Christ, it meant, to the disciples, also a supreme entering the communion with Him. Who could tell how they entered that communion, by climbing that mountain, in a dialogue of great intimacy with Him, but a dialogue which they felt, intensely, His godhead?

⁷³⁷ *Gnostic Heads* 1: 50; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. II, pp. 139-140.

existences, either they imparted themselves, or they let themselves to be imparted”⁷³⁸. Therefore, let him learn, out of these, that no all the realities which subsist out of God are under time too. This is for, there are some of them which are without beginning and they are not abolished because of the Trinitarian unity, the Only One without-beginning-by-nature, and because of the Trinity’s above-nature-simplicity. As, in the same way, the mind, as a faded icon of that overwhelming non-division, it isn’t composed by any means, due to the mind’s natural understandings⁷³⁹.

Everyone who doesn’t admit the truth of the spiritual states imprinted into the body - by the gifts from the Ghost which are in the soul of them who have advanced in their life according to God, and he calls as dispassion the killing, through habituation, the passionate side, and not the habituation to the work towards the good ones, of him who has turned himself away from the evil things and who has directed himself towards the good thing, as one who has rejected his evil habits and he has enriched himself in the good habits – he denies, consequently to such opinions, also the living with the body in the incorruptible age, to them who exists (who are created)⁷⁴⁰. This is for, if in the future age the body too is imparted together with the soul, with the mysterious goods, the body will be imparted in the present age too, according to the power, with the grace given, as a gift, by God, in a mysterious and untold manner, to the cleaned mind, and the body too will improprieate the godlike ones according to itself. Thus, the body is transformed and it is sanctified but without being the passionate part killed, by habituation. And the passionate part,

⁷³⁸ *Quoted work I*, pp. 48-49; *The Romanian Philokalia*, vol. II, pp. 139-140.

⁷³⁹ The uncreated works of God do not affect the simplicity of His being, for the Person doesn’t lose His unity by His works, but He shows Himself whole in every work of His.

⁷⁴⁰ The dispassion doesn’t mean the death of the passionate power of the soul, but it means getting habituated to directing its work towards the good things. The dispassion isn’t motionless, in a Buddhist sense, but it means love for the good things, for God and for people. The dispassion doesn’t mean “apathy”, but it means full-of-love interest in everything that is good for people. It is not about carelessness, but it is about mercy and positive and painful responsibility, as Jesus felt. Barlaam, as philosopher, he was easily carried away by this contempt of Buddhist fashion, towards everything that wasn’t an undisturbed cogitation, towards this unilateral intellectualism, which the Occidental theology tend towards, by and large. He who thinks like that, he will no longer be able to understand what the body is preserved for, in an eternal life. This is because, the body without the passionate power directed towards good, it won’t be more than an empty shell, a totally meaningless apparition.

by being common to the body and to the soul, the body's tendencies and works are sanctified too⁷⁴¹. This is for, by being detached from the goods of the life from here, due to the hope for the future goods, and by moving in a healthy manner through the lack of worries, the mind will feel, according to saint Diadochus, the godlike untold goodness, so that the mind will convey to the body too, as it advances, its kindness⁷⁴². And this joy, one occurring within soul and within body, it is a non-liar proof of the incorruptible life.

The mind perceives (catches) a light, the feeling catches another light. The feeling perceives (catches) that light submitted to the senses, which shows the things submitted to the sense as submitted to the senses. And the light of the mind it is the knowledge being into meanings. Consequently, the sight and the mind do not perceive (catch) the same light; but only as long as each of them works according to its nature and into the realities according to nature. But when they are imparted with an above-nature grace or power, they who have been found worthy they will see both with their sight and mind the realities which are above all feeling and mind⁷⁴³, we to say

⁷⁴¹ One must not kill the passionate part, but one must sanctify the passionate part. And by being the passionate part sanctified, the body will be sanctified too, given the fact that the passionate part is common both to body and soul. This is for the passionate power is activated through body. The body participates to the soul's life through the passionate power of it. The soul and the body are intertwined in the passionate side.

⁷⁴² But the rational power isn't separated from the mind. But it is the power which the mind works through, upon the body, and it sanctifies the body. In the passional power, the mind still meets the body. The mind, by rejoicing more of the immaterial realities, it attracts the body too, through the passional part, to love those immaterial realities.

⁷⁴³ Saint Gregory Palamas often stresses upon the mysterious union that is between soul and body. In the perceiving of the senses the soul meets the body. The body won't be body without the life of the soul from within body. The soul's life is the body's life too. Still, on the plan of the natural life, in the work of the senses the body is dominant, while in the work of the mind the soul is dominant. But the union between the two works, or between soul and body, it will become full when the Holy Ghost dwells within the believer, or when the believer has become spiritualized and he has been elevated to a work that exceeds both the natural work of the senses and the mind's work. In that superior and unifier work, the work of the sense receives a character or even more accentuated spirituality, and the work of the mind becomes even more sensitive. The possibility of this spiritualization of the sensitiveness, or of sensitizing the spirituality, it is given by the fact that the whole seen reality is actually a dynamic plasticized rationality (the science says today that that is the mass of energy, or vice versa); and all the more the human body, as crossed and moved by the rational soul. Diadochus of Photice says: "The eye of will no longer be deceived, when its cover has become - namely the body - through restraint, a very thin fabric". (*One Hundred Heads* 71;

together with the Great Gregory the Speaker-about-God, in a way known only by God and by them who work these.

These are the things we have learnt out of Scriptures; these things we have received from our fathers; these things we have known by a little experience. These things we know that have been written by the all-honored amongst hieromonks pious Gregory (Palamas), for them who live in holiness a life of appeasement, by exactly following the teachings of the saint. These we have signed, in order to provide the readers with trust:

1. Hieromonk Isaac, the protos of the honored monasteries from the Holy Mountain.
2. Theodosius the Hieromonk, hegumen of the honored and imperial Lavra.
3. The Hegumen of the Iviron Monastery (in his dialect).
4. Hieromonk Ioanichie, the hegumen of the honored and imperial Vatopedi Monastery.
5. The hegumen of the Serbians' Monastery (in his dialect).
6. Philotheos, the lowest amongst hieromonks, I signed for I think the likewise.
7. Amphilochius, the lowest amongst hieromonks and the confessor of the honored monastery of the Esphigmenou.
8. Theodosius, the lowest amongst hieromonks and the confessor of the Vatopedi Monastery.
9. Hieromonk Theostiric, the hegumen of Cutlumus Monastery.
10. Gerontius Maruli, the sinner, living amongst the old men of the honored Lavra, thinking likewise, I have signed.
11. Kallistos Muzaru, the lowest amongst monks.
12. Gerasimos, the unimportant amongst monks, seeing and reading these things which have been written with love for truth, and accepting them, I have signed.
13. Moses, the unimportant old men, the lowest amongst monks, for cogitating likewise, I subscribed.
14. Gregory Stavrolangaditis, the lowest and the most unimportant amongst monks, might be also

The Romanian Philokalia, vol. I, p. 336). In this sense, Saint Maximos, at his turn, he affirmed the surpassing of the soul-body duality within saints (*Ambigua*; G.P. 91: 1193-1196).

- hesychast, cogitating and understanding these, I have signed.
15. Isaiah, the old man from Magula hermitage, and the lowest amongst hieromonks, cogitating likewise, I have signed.
 16. Mark of the Sinaite, the lowest amongst monks.
 17. Kallistos, from Magula Hermitage, and the lowest amongst monks.
 18. And old hesychast from the Monastery of the Syrians, in his dialect.
 19. Sophronius, the lowest amongst monks.
 20. The humble Bishop James of Gericho and of the Holy Mountain, nourished with the teachings of the Holy Mountain, confessing that, through the chieftains who have signed here, it subscribed for cogitating the same, the whole Mount Athos, likewise speaking I too, I have sub-signed, and I pressed my seal on it. And after all of those, I have added this too, that him who do not speaks alike with the saints, alike us, and alike the fathers from above, we do not receive him in partaking with us.

Of the Same One:

Saint Gregory Palamas
Archbishop of Thessaloniki

**150 Heads about the Natural
Knowledge, about the Knowledge
about God, about the Moral Life, and
about Doing**

21. About the fact that the world started, we are taught by the nature, we are entrusted by history, and we are limpidly shown that by the inventions of the craftsmanships, by the provisions of the laws, and by the orders of the states. This is for we know the inventors of almost all craftsmanships, and the giver of the laws, and the initial founders of the states. And we know also them who wrote, for the first time, about something. But we do not see any of them living before the creation of the world and of the time, told us by Moses. And Moses himself, who described the beginning of the creation of the world, we gave us, by so many wonderful things and words, undeniable proofs about the truth he presented, so that almost the whole mankind reckoned him as worthy to be believed, while reckoning as laughing matter them who thought the opposite ones. But the nature too of this world, by always needing a new beginning for each thing within it, and the world not being able to live without it at all, it shows us just through things, its first beginning that it wasn't out of another beginning⁷⁴⁴.

⁷⁴⁴ If the world hadn't had a beginning, we wouldn't have known the founders of the states, the inventors of the craftsmanships, or the giver of the laws. All of those would have been

22. The fact that the world hadn't only started, but had followed to have an end too, it is shown to us by its nature, as one that is amongst the random ones. This is because it always ends into its part⁷⁴⁵. But the sure and unshakeable entrustment for that, it is given to us by the prophecy of all of them who were instilled by God and the prophecy of Christ Who is God. Believing to these ones, as them who told the truth, it is ought not only by the pious, once they see that those told the truth also regarding all the other things they foretold. One can find out from those not the fact that this whole world advances towards inexistence but, as our bodied will be detached, likewise the world will be detached and it will be recomposed too, out of the power of the godlike Ghost, in a more godlike form, in order the world to be on our measure.

23. The wisemen of the Hellenes say that the sky turns through the nature of the soul of the world, and that even the right-reckoning and the rationality teach us that. What right-reckoning? What rationality? This is because, if the sky had turned by that power of the world which they call it soul, and that souls belongs to the whole world, how wouldn't have turned also the earth and the water and the air, especially for, according to them, the soul is always in movement? But we see that the earth stands by its nature, likewise does the water keeping the lowest place. Thus, also the sky always moves by its nature and it moves in a circle, always keeping the highest place. And then, how could have been this soul of the world, whose nature the sky had been moved through? It is, I wonder, a rational soul? But then it would have had a free will and it wouldn't have moved the sky with the same movements. This is because the realities which have a free will they move one time in a way, and another time in another way. And then, what trace of rational soul can we see in the lowest sphere of the world, namely into the earth, or in those close to earth, in water, in air, and even in fire? This is because the soul of the

from ever. All the things have a beginning in the frame of the world. But the world itself must have a beginning that hadn't begun out of something else, out of which there had appeared another beginning.

⁷⁴⁵ The world doesn't appear to be unconditionally necessary, as necessarily existing. The world is contingent. It could also not to exist. Still, the world doesn't exist haphazardly. The world exists for God wanted that. The fact that the world isn't unconditionally necessary it is proven by the fact that the world always ends in its constitutive parts. This shows the fact that the world will have, as whole, and end too.

world must belong to these ones too. And then, how could be some of them animated and others unanimated? This is admitted by them too. And the last ones are not like that only partially, but the stone is whole stone, the metal is whole metal, the dust is whole dust, the water, the air, and the fire, all are likewise. And about fire, they too say that it moves by its nature and not by soul. So, if the soul had been common, what it could have moved like, only the sky, by the nature of the soul – and not by its own nature? But they might say that the soul, that, according to them, it moves the heavenly body, it isn't a rational soul. But what could that be like, if that soul was the spring of our souls? If it is not rational, it will have to be at least sensitive or natura (vegetal). But we cannot see any of these qualities as moving a body without limbs. And some organic limb we do not see being had either the sky, or the earth, or by any of the natural elements. This is because any organ is composed of diverse substances. But each of the natural elements has a simple substance, especially does so the sky⁷⁴⁶.

The soul is the entelechy of the organic body that has the life in potentiality⁷⁴⁷. But the sky, thought, by not having any limb or organic part, it won't be able to survive either. How could have had soul, everywhere, what cannot survive? But they who have made themselves vain in their cogitations, they contrived with an unwise heart, a soul that neither is nor it will be, and they made this soul as the builder, the ruler, and the caretaker of the whole seen world. They also describe that soul as some sort of root and spring of our souls, that soul having its own birth from the mind. And they say that this mind it is something else, according to its being, unlike what they say that God, God being above all realities. So are dogmatized these ones, the most important personalities in what regards the wisdom and in the theology of the Hellenes, and so they are no better at all, than those who deify the animals and the stones and, even on the opposite, they are worse regarding the faith.

⁷⁴⁶ In this chapter and in the next one, it is combated the theory of a soul of the cosmos, the cosmos-zoism, or the cosmos-psychism, or the hylozoism, that is one of the forms of the Hellene pantheism.

⁷⁴⁷ The Aristotelian theory of the soul as entelechy or as form of the organic body, which the body is taken through towards a target of it, it has been accepted also by some Church Fathers. The body has the life in potentiality, in the sense that the life is developed, or it is actualized. And because the soul is tied to the growing organic life, one can also say that, most part of the soul is, at the beginning, a potentiality that develops.

This is for, the beasts, the gold, the stone, the brass, they are something, despite they are amongst the last ones of the creatures. But a soul of the world, one bearing stars, it doesn't exist, and it isn't at all something amongst the existing realities, except it is a contrivance of the devilish cogitation.

24. Those ones also say: because the heavenly body must move, but there farther isn't any place which the sky could advance towards, the sky turns back to itself, and its advancing is but a spinning. Very well. So, if there had been a place, the sky would have been carried upwards as in case of the fire, or even more than the fire, for it is lighter than the nature of the fire. And this movement isn't of the nature of the soul, but it is of the lightness of the nature. If, therefore, the advancing of the sky means spinning around, and this is had, by its nature and not by the nature of the soul, then the heavenly body will spin not by the nature of the soul, but by its own nature. So, it has not soul, neither there is some heavenly soul, or of the entire world. The sole rational soul is the human soul, that is not heavenly and that cannot be comprised in a place, but, by its nature, the human soul is understanding essence⁷⁴⁸.

25. And the heavenly body has not the power to advance or to stretch itself upwards. And this is not because of no longer being there any space, but because of being wrapped by the sky also the sphere of the ether from beyond it. That's why it doesn't advance upwards, not because there is no place which to advance towards, for the width of the sky is covered by the sphere of the ether. It doesn't stretch above that sphere because of being that thinner, so that it is above the sky by its nature. So, not because of not having space above itself, the sky won't go higher, but because there is no other body thinner and lighter than itself is.

26. There is not body higher than the heavenly body. But this isn't the cause because of not being the heavenly body able to go higher, but it is because the sky comprises any body and there is and there was no body to go beyond the sky in order to cross through the sky. But we the right-worshippers and believers, we are not forbidden to reach above the sky, this is for, God Who fills all the realities up, He stretches beyond the

⁷⁴⁸ This Christian teaching about the world as not having its own soul within it, it liberated the road of the scientific research of the nature.

sky too, endlessly, and He existed before the world was created, He filling up, as He fills up not too, the whole space from within world, and nothing has been added to Him in order to occur a certain body within Him. Consequently, neither outside the sky is some impediment, in order there not to be space, as there is the space around the world, or as there is the space that occurred within the world, so that there to be bodies in Him.

27. How then, once there is not impediment, the heavenly body doesn't direct itself upwards, but it moves in a circle, turning back to itself? This is for, by staying on top, the thinnest of all, it is above all bodies, and it is also the nimblest one in movement. As what is comprised but it, it is as heavy and as low as one can get, likewise the heavenly body is the lightest, and the highest, and the nimblest in movement. But if it moves by nature, remaining up to the surface, and what remains to the surface it cannot be separated by nature from those whose surface it stays to, and those to whose surface the heavenly body stay, they are spheric, necessarily, the heavenly body moves around those; and not by a souly nature, but by an own corporeal nature, for it is changes a place for another, in turns. And the movement is characteristic to the bodies, as the opposite state is opposed to the bodies⁷⁴⁹.

28. Somebody can see also near to us, the winds which smooth out the surfaces, not separating themselves from these ones when moving, and not going higher, not because there is no space, but because the things from above them are lighter. So, the winds remain at the surface of the thins which they touch, because they are, by nature, lighter that those things. And they move around those things not by a souly nature, but y their own nature. I reckon that this partial resemblance was intended to be shown by the wise Solomon, when he called the heavenly body with the name of the winds, writing about it: "The wind goes around and it turns back to its circles" (Eccl. 1: 60. But the nature of the wind from around us it is so far from the nature of the higher things and from their as quick as possible motion, as far their lightness is too.

⁷⁴⁹ Heads no. 4-7 present a vision about the sky that is outdated by the astronomical knowledge that had been achieved in the following centuries. But there is a truth in what Saint Gregory Palamas says: the nature's movement isn't carried by a soul, but by the law of physics.

29. According to the Hellenes' wisemen, there are two zones of the earth temperate and inhabited. Each of these is divided in two inhabited worlds, so that they give the world four of these. That's why I argue that there are four kinds of people, which cannot cross one to another. This is because, according to them, some people inhabit our area, together with us, being they separated from us by the burning area of the earth. Opposed to them, are those who, according to the Hellenes' wiseman point of view, they live beneath this area, as are opposed to us them who have the same tropic with us. Amongst those ones, some of them are opposed, other are at the antipodes and turned towards us. They didn't know the fact that, except the tenth part of the Earth's sphere, all the other parts are covered by water.

30. Anybody can know that except the world inhabited by us, no other part of the world is inhabited, because of being covered by seas. Let's take heed also at the fact that the four natural elements which the world consists of, are equal parts⁷⁵⁰. And due to the rarefied state of the air, and to the sphere of each of them, it has a volume multiplied in comparison to others, as it seems to Aristotle too. He says that there are five natural elements, spherically placed in five layers, the smaller layer always being comprised by the larger layer, the land by water, the water by air, the air by fire, and the fire by ether. And this is the world.

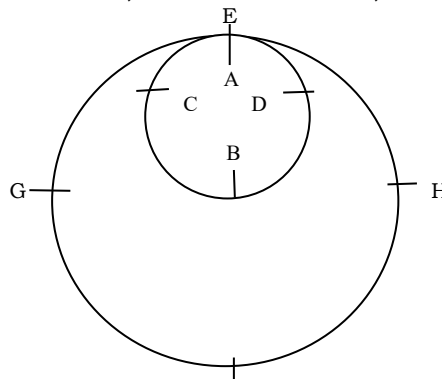
31. The ether is way more limpid than the fire is, and it is also called as burning matter. The fire has the multiplied volume of the air's sphere, the air of the water, the water of the earth which, due to the fact that it has the biggest thickness, it has the smallest volume of the four natural elements from

⁷⁵⁰ Then was admitted the idea that the natural world would be composed by four natural elements: earth, water, air, and fire, and above the world there would be the fifth element: the ether. This simplistic idea about the five natural elements, and about their unchanged proportions, about their positioning in ever wider circles which comprise one another, for instance, it is inferior to the biblical intuition about the great complexity of the world, intuition reiterated by the Holy Fathers. It was characteristic to the science and to a part of the Hellene and Byzantine philosophy, which the modern science rendered as obsolete. Saint Gregory Palamas has been using that "science" in the previous chapters, and he is going to use it in other following few chapters, by pursuing his goal to show that the soul cannot be present as a motion force all through this cosmos, because the soul is only within the human organisms living on earth, and the livable earth forms only the tenth part of the Earth's surface, and neither the entire land is lived, but only some areas of it which have a temperate climate, because, for instance, the areas which are too hot, they are uninhabited.

under the sky. So, the sphere of the water having the multiplied sphere of the earth, both spheres would move around the same center, both of the earth and of the water. The water wouldn't allow the beasts form on earth to use any part of the earth, because of covering the whole dry land and because of extending all over the earth's surface. But because the water doesn't comprise the whole earth's surface, for the dry land we inhabit is uncovered by water, the water's sphere is necessarily not tied to the earth's center. Consequently, one must research how much the water is outside the earth's center. Is the water higher or lower than we are? It cannot be higher, for we see that, partially, the surface of the water is below us. Therefore, the center of the water's sphere is lower than us, and even lower than the earth's center. It remains to be researched how far is the water from this center of the earth.

32. One could know how far, namely how low, from our point of view, it is the center of the water, from the center of the earth, by taking heed at the fact that to the surface of the earthly sphere, which is inhabited by us, it corresponds the surface of the water seen by us and which is below us, under the earth we step on. The part of the earth inhabited by us is a tenth of the earth surface. This is for, the earth has five areas, and we are inhabiting a half of one of these five areas. So, if one wants to apply to this tenth of surface a sphere around the earth, he will find out the sphere that it matches it. That will have the double of the sphere's diameter which is applied to, from outside, and which it comprises, and it size of eight times bigger and its center at the edge of the earth, which it seems to us the lowest. This thing is made clear by the drawing.

33. Let's say that the sphere of the earth is a circle inside which it is written A, B, C, and D, as around it is drawn instead of the sphere of the water, another circle, which is tangent to the surface of that tenth from above, of the circle from it. In this circle it is written E, F, G, and H. The edge of the inside circle, which, form out point of view, it is the lowest, that will be the



F

center of the exterior circle. This one, by having a double diameter, one can show through geometrical demonstrations that the sphere of whose diameter the double of the diameter of the sphere that has its diameter as a half, it will be eight times bigger. This liquid sphere, that is eight times bigger it is mixed with the earth. That's why many springs gush out of earth, and the rich and unmixed water of the rivers occur and they flow into the not few seas; multitude of lacks are scattered and there almost isn't place on earth where, by digging, somebody won't find water flowing underneath.

34. This is because, except the part inhabited by us, there is no other inhabited part, it is shown also by both the drawing and the rationality. This is because, if the center of the water and of the earth had been identical, then the earth would have been totally uninhabited, likewise, and even much more so, if the water had as its center the lowest part of the earth, from our point of view, except the part inhabited by us, which is tangent to the upper part of the water's sphere, all the others would be covered by much water, so that they couldn't be inhabited. And because it was said before, that only in the inhabited part of the earth there is incorporated rational soul, and this one is the only one, it would turn out that only in this part dwell also the speechless beasts.

35. The sight is born out of combined colors and figures, on many ways; the smell is born out of steams, the taste out of wet, the hearing out of noises, the touch out of harsh or smooth surfaces by touching them. And the contents which are formed into senses are from bodies, but they aren't bodies, though they are corporeal. They neither are the shapes of the bodies as such, but they are their imprintings, some kind of images separated in an unseparated manner from the shapes of the bodies. These ones can be ascertained especially through sight and, especially so, those which cannot be seen in a mirror.

36. This imprinting from senses, by being they impropriated by the imagination power (imagining) of the soul, the soul will fully separate not the senses themselves, but, as I said before, the images from within them, from the bodies and from their shapes. And by having them gathered like a treasury,

it brings to use, from inside, one at a time, even when the body is not present, and so makes all of them to itself, as seen, and heard, and tasted, and smelled, and touched⁷⁵¹.

37. This imagination power (imagining) of the soul it can be found in the rational creature, in the middle, between mind and senses. The mind, by looking and by turning into itself the images it received from senses, as separated from bodies and incorporeal images, it commits the diverse meanings, by discerning amongst them, by comparing them and by judging them in diverse modes, passionately, dispassionately, in an unmediated manner, wrongly, or unmistakingly. Out of these ones are born most of the virtues and of the sins, good and bad opinions. This is because, not the whole meaning of the mind comes out of these ones and it is about these ones, but there are some which cannot be found by somebody as coming from the senses, but they are given by the mind, and that's why I have said that not all the truth and the deceit, the virtue and the evilness from within thoughts have their beginning from imagination (imagining).

38. It is worthy to wonder about it and to be searched, how from the temporary and submitted to senses things, there can be born within soul a steadfast beauty or ugliness, a richness or a poorness, a glory or a lack of glory, and, simply speaking, a mental (intelligible) light producing eternal life, or a mental (intelligible) darkness causing torments.

39. The mind, when carried away by the soul's imagination, and by that intertwines with the senses, it gives birth to a combined knowledge. For instance, if somebody looks at the sundown with his senses, but he looks, in the same time, to the close moon that stays with its bulged part towards the sun, until, slowly, the moon get far during the next days and it becomes increasingly lightened, until the moon reaches on the other side of the sun, and then slowly comes closer with the

⁷⁵¹ There is a distinction between the shapes which objectively depend on the bodies, and their images which these shapes imprint in senses and which, until they remain within senses, on one hand, they differ from the objective shapes of the bodies, but on the other hand, they are not separated from the bodies. Then, the imagination, by taking these images, it fully separates them from the shapes of the bodies, but without separating the senses themselves. This makes possible that, into imagination, the images of the things can take shapes somewhat different from the shapes of the things. Thus, the imagination has a creator function, and not simply a reproductive function, as the senses have. The imagination stores them within itself, and then it projects them when it wills, even in the absence of the bodies and of their shapes.

other side diminishing its light increasingly more, until it loses it, and it reaches again on the other side of the sun. These views being memorized by the mind, as one that keeps the said things in its imagination, and the one that is always present into senses, it realizes, by common sense, and out of imagination and out of understanding, that the moon has its light from the sun and that the axis of the moon is closer to earth and the moon is way lower than the sun is⁷⁵².

40. But, not only the data concerning the moon, but also those regarding the sun, the sun's eclipses, and the conjunctions at their time, the changes and the distances of the other planets on the sky, the diverse formations they compose together, and, in short, all the things we know about the sky, and then the rationalities of the nature, all the arts, the craftsmanships and, simply speaking, the whole knowledge gathered from partial observations, regarding all the things, we have gained them out of senses and out of imagination, through our mind. None of these can be called as spiritual, but rather natural, because of not comprising those ones of the Ghost.

41. Where we have found out from, something sure and non-liar about God, and about the entire world, and about ourselves? Not out of the teaching from the Ghost?⁷⁵³ This is for the Ghost taught us that only God is The One Who really exists, and Who is always and Who is unchanged, and He doesn't receive His existence from the non-existing realities, and Who doesn't go towards inexistence; that He is in Three Hypostases and Almighty; that He brought, in six days, with His Word, to existence, the existing realities out of the inexistent realities⁷⁵⁴,

⁷⁵² He explains the judgments done by the mind, by using an association between the sensitive images we receive from the senses and which are recorded by imagination, and the images present within senses.

⁷⁵³ We have the partial knowledge out of senses, out of imagination (memory) and out of mind, namely out of their common work. So, they compose the natural knowledge. But the sure and non-liar knowledge about the world as a whole, namely about the origin and the purpose of the world, about ourselves as unitary persons, and about God, it is no longer out of the three powers of our nature, but it is out of the teaching given us by the Holy Ghost and faithfully received by us.

⁷⁵⁴ Following the advice from Saint Maximos the Confessor, he calls God as "He Who exists in existent or true way" (ο οντως ὄν), and the creatures are only the existing realities (τα ὄντα). The true existence or the existent existence is that coming from nobody, but from Himself, that one that doesn't change and it doesn't go towards decomposition (corruption). The simply existing realities, are those which have no existence within themselves, but they are brought to existence, from nothing, by God.

better said He gave existence concomitantly to all of them, as Moses says. This is for, we hear Moses saying: “In the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1: 4), not as a void, of course, neither without the realities from between them. This is because, the earth was mixed with water and each of them were bearing within them, as a pregnancy, the air and the animals and the plants according to their kinds⁷⁵⁵. And the sky comprised the diverse light and illuminators, which everything subsisted in⁷⁵⁶. Thus, God made at the beginning the heaven and the earth as a substance that comprised everything, and that bore everything in potentiality, disapproving from far, as is should, them who reckon that the matter preexisted from itself.

42. After that, beautifying somewhat and adorning the world, He Who has brought all realities to existence out of inexistence, He shared to each one, its own and due order according to its features, and He completed the world in six days, differentiating each reality only with His command, and bringing out like from some hidden treasures, to they seen shapes, the realities placed within the world⁷⁵⁷, by placing and by combining in the most harmonious and appropriate manner, one thing with another and each of them with all the other, and all of them with each one. And the steadfast earth, He surrounded it like some center, with a very high circle, and He tied it up, all-wisely, through the realities from within middle, with the always in motion sky⁷⁵⁸, so that the same world is both steadfast and moving.

43. By giving such an order to each of the edges of the whole, the Great Craftsman fixed into motionlessness and He set – in the same time – this whole in motion, and so He made it a well composed world. And to the ones which are between these edges, He shared, again, to each one what was due. He placed some of them up and He commands them to swirls at

⁷⁵⁵ Κροκοποιον – pregnant. The earth and the water were pregnant with the plant and with the animals they were to give birth. They have within them, virtually, the plants and the animals. It is hinted here a conception resemblant to the conception of the today’s science. It seems that there would be also about ether, as a pregnancy of the earth and of the water. So, the natural elements weren’t, though, separated, especially at the beginning.

⁷⁵⁶ Saint Gregory Palamas hinted here that in the light, or in its energy, had its subsistence the whole created world.

⁷⁵⁷ The plants and the animals, but also all the shapes in movement were potentially given in the original substance of the world, as in some hidden treasures.

⁷⁵⁸ Here, Saint Gregory Palamas is using, again, the “natural science” available at his time.

height and to move together with the highest border of the whole, in good planning and order, for the whole time. He placed those which are light and fruitful and easy to process, in the use of the people. He placed those which get warm above the middle temperature, to raise, on a good purpose, above the others, in order they to appease the too big cold, and their too bid warmth to be appeased by cold. The lack of measure in starting the highest edges, it is restraint by the inverse movement of some of them. By these, He has given us the very useful differences of the years, or the hours, and the measures of the distances and of the time, and to them who understand, He has given them the knowledge about God Who built, ordered, and adorned everything. So, he let the ones from above and from height to swirl in this diverse and twofold manner, for the sake of the world's beauty and for the sake of many benefits. And He placed others below, and in the middle, namely those which are heavier and passive by nature and which endure the transformations more easily, towards a good use. He organized all realities as an adornment and according to the connection of their rationalities, in order Him to name, rightly so, the whole, as adornment (cosmos).

44. Thus, at Genesis, it was built, in the first place, a thing form amongst buildings, and then another thing, and after all of them, the human being. The human being was found worthy of so much honor from God, so that the whole this seen world was made, before the human being and for the human being. And the Kingdom of Heavens was prepared immediately after the foundation of the world, also for the human being (Mt. 245: 34), and before the human being⁷⁵⁹. But there was also a counsel previously to the creation of the human being, and the human being was created by the hand of God, and in the image and likeness of God, and the human being didn't receive everything from this matter of this world submitted to senses, but only the body, as the other living creatures, but he received the soul out of the realities form above-world, better said from God Himself, through untold breath. And this, for the human being is something great and wonderful and she/he exceeds

⁷⁵⁹ Not only this world is prepared like a palace, for the human being – the emperor that was to appear after that – but also the Kingdom of Heavens was prepared in advance for the human being, for the human being had to look towards the Kingdom of Heavens ever since the beginning of his existence.

everything and she/he looks at everything and she/he rules everything; and, on the other hand, the human being can know God and can receive God and the human being proves to be, more than anything, the result of the above-everything glory of the Craftsman. And not only that the human being can receive God through her/his ascetic toil and by grace, but she/he can be also united with Him in a sole hypostasis⁷⁶⁰.

45. In these ones and in those alike these ones, there is the true wisdom and the savior knowledge, which produce the happiness from above. But which Euclid, which Marin, which Ptolemais could see these? Which Empedocles, which Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, could know these ones through the methods of the logics and of the other natural sciences? Better said, which sense perceived ones like these? Could the mind approach them? And if those who were philosophizing through nature, and them who were alike, the wisdom out of these seemed to them as humiliated, nonetheless it is proved today its overwhelming greatness. This is because, they almost stand like some speechless living-creatures facing the wisdom out of these (and if you want, as some slaves, reckoned as inferior to them who make the imperial diadem). So are these compared to the

⁷⁶⁰ It is specified here, concentratedly, everything that differs the human being from all the other sensitive creatures. On one hand, the human being looks, consciously, at everything, and she/he rules everything, for being an image of God. The human being is the conscience mastering and transforming the world. In the human being one unveils the purpose of the world. Without the human being, the world would have been purposeless, meaningless, lightless, and the world's existence would have been deprived of an essential side of its, or of the most essential one. Without the human being, there wouldn't have been created within world anything bearer of meaning. Without the human being the world wouldn't have known about itself. On the other hand, by proving that the world is on a purpose, the existence of the human being proves the fact that the world needs the full meaning which the human being can discover it and give it to the world. Only in connection with the total light, we can see a meaning within world, and we can search for and achieve a final meaning. But this can be done, also, only in connection with the conscience that has within itself the whole light, it will be able the human conscience to discover the full meaning of his own existence and of the existence of the world, desired by both the human being and the world. That's why, the human conscience is created in order to be able to united itself with the fully enlightened conscience of God. Only the human being is able to receive in his conscience the conscience of God that equals to the total light. Only that proves that the world is the masterpiece of an all-enlightened Craftsman, and great in His unlimited light and power. The glory of the human being, as image of the glory of the supreme conscience, it is shown especially in the fact that it becomes the conscience of the hypostasis of the supreme conscience, that through the human being's light, the Subject of the supreme will and of the consummate light of the consummate conscience, He can communicate His light and He can express His conscience and will.

true and above-all wisdom and compared to the teaching of the Ghost.

46. Not only knowing the true God, as much as possible, it overwhelmingly exceeds the Hellenes' philosophy, but even the knowing of what place the human being has before God, it surpasses all their wisdom. This is for, the human being alone - from among all the earthly and heavenly realities - was created in the image of the Builder, in order the human being to look towards Him and to love Him and to be the only knower of Him, and through the faith, through the tendency, and through the love for Him, the human being to preserve her/his beauty; and all the other borne by this earth and by this sky, the human being to see them as below herself/himself and totally non-partakers to the mind⁷⁶¹. By not being able at all to see this, the wisemen of the Hellenes disregarded our nature, and they didn't serve God, but they worshipped the creature instead of Maker (Rom. 1: 25), enwrapping their mind with sensitive and insensitive spheres, and reckoning that each one of these spheres has power and importance on the measure of the size of their bodies. By honoring those in worthless manner, by calling those gods, smaller or bigger, they gave to creatures the mastery upon all realities. Out of those submitted to the senses, and out of the philosophy about those, they gathered to themselves abomination, dishonor, and the ultimate poverty within their souls, as also much intelligible and tormenting darkness⁷⁶².

47. The fact that we know that we are made in the image of our Maker, it doesn't allow us to deify the intelligible world. This is for, not in the composition of the body it consists this image of, but it consists in the nature of our mind, and nothing is, according to the nature, better than the mind. This is because, if there had been anything better, it would have been

⁷⁶¹ Not only the knowledge about God remained unknown to the Hellene philosophy, but also the recognition of the unique greatness of the human being. This is because, though any human being who does not philosophize, she/he realizes that she/he is above all the other creatures, by her/his conscience and will, the Hellene philosophy didn't admit that. As the mythology too, likewise the philosophy lowered the human being, from her/his level superior to creatures, and deemed the human being to worship the creatures. But only in communion with the Person Bearer of supreme conscience and freedom, the human being can be filled up too with light and freedom.

⁷⁶² Saint Gregory Palamas often uses the expression "intelligible and tormenting darkness" (ἡτον σκότος), as one that stays before the mind and torments the mind through nescience, as there stays the darkness in front of the senses and it torments them.

in that “in the image”. But for what is best within us it is our mind, and our mind is in the godlike image and it was built up by God, what the difficulty is us to see, or better said, how it isn’t obvious, through that, the fact that the Maker of our understanding side is also the Maker of everything that is understanding⁷⁶³? So, the entire understanding nature is together serving with us and in the image of the Builder⁷⁶⁴, even if the angels are more honored than we are, as being outside the bodies, and closer to that nature that is totally incorporeal and uncreated. Better said, on some of them, who kept their level and who tend towards what they have been made, even though they are servants as we are, we honor them and they are much more honored than we are, through their level. And others, by not keeping their level and by rebelling and disregarding the target they have been created for, by getting as far as possible from them who are close to God, those ones have fallen off the honor. And because they attempt to attract us too, to falling, not only they are worthless and dishonored, but they even are enemies of God, and to our human kind they cause defilement, and they wage war to us as much as they can.

48. But they who are taught in the nature’s science and the researchers of the stars, who boast themselves as knowing everything, because of not being able to know, through their philosophy, nothing about what we said above, they not only that elevated also the master of the intelligible darkness and all the rebelled powers from underneath that darkness, above themselves, but they even called those as gods (deities), and they honored them in temples, and they brought them sacrifices, and they obeyed the so-corruptible rules of those ones, and they let themselves to be mocked, for so long, by priests without holiness, by cleanings which defile and increase their wicked self-appreciation, and by prophets and prophetesses who slipped so far from truth.

49. I said that, for the man to know God and to know himself and his level (which are had now also by the Christians

⁷⁶³ The fact itself that our understanding mind is only in the image of God and it is not God Himself, it shows us that we must not identify God to a certain reality, or to some mental or understanding realities, or realities known with the mind. God is even above that level. God is above the order of the angels who are mental or understanding beings.

⁷⁶⁴ So, the angels too, they are in the image of God, though differently from how the people are in the image of God because of not having a body which to master with, over the world and to spiritualize the matter.

who are reckoned as simple people), it exceeds the power of the knowledge of the nature and of the astronomy and of all the philosophy related to them. We are adding now that even the knowing by the mind of its own helplessness and the striving to surpass that, it is something incomparable higher than knowing and researching the sizes of the stars, the rationalities of the things, the birth of the lower realities and the periods of the higher realities, the deviations and the periods, the constants and the swirls, the separations and the meetings and – in a word – all the various relations of the multitude of the motions. This is for, the mind that has known its own helplessness, it has found out where it can enter the salvation through, and to get close to the light of the knowledge and to receive the true wisdom, which doesn't disappear with the present age.

50. Every rational and understanding nature, either called by somebody as angelic, or human being, she/he has life, due to which it remains, through existence, immortal and not receiving corruption. But the understanding and rational nature from within us, it doesn't have only the life through being, but it also has the doing. This is for it makes alive the body united with it, and due to that it is called as the body's life. But it is also called life for another too. But this is its work. This is because, what is for another, it won't even be the being in itself. But the understand nature of the angels it doesn't have the life like such a work too. This is because, it hasn't received from God a body united with it, in order it to receive, towards that, a life-maker power too. This nature too, it is able to do the opposite deeds, namely of evilness and of kindness. This is shown by the evil angels who suffered falling because of their pride. Therefore, the angels too are somewhat composed, having their being and one of the opposite features, namely virtue or evilness. From here is shown that the angels too, they don't have the kindness as being⁷⁶⁵.

51. The soul of each of the speaking beasts it is the life of the body animated by that soul. They have the life not as being, but as work, by not being in itself, but for another. This is because, this life isn't seen as having nothing else, except the ones works by it into the body. That's' why, by detaching from

⁷⁶⁵ Not the being can be opposite to itself, because of ending, if that was the case, in inexistence, but the works of the being can be opposite. Even the angels have a work that can be opposite, for they can be good or evil. So, the angels do not have the kindness as being.

the body, it will necessarily be detached itself too. This is because, it is not less mortal than the body. This is because, everything that it is, it is and it is said towards death. That's why it dies together with the person who dies.

52. The soul of each one among people, that soul is also the life of the body animated through that soul, and that soul has a life-maker work for another, namely a work shown into the body animated by that soul. But that soul has the life not only as work, but also as being, and this is for the soul is alive through himself and for himself. This is for, the soul shows himself as having the rational and understanding life, as a life that is obviously different from the life of the body and of the ones which are within body. That's why, even though the body is gets detached, the soul won't scatter. And in addition to the fact that the souls won't scatter, the soul also remains immortal, for the soul isn't shown as being for another, but the soul has the life by himself as being⁷⁶⁶.

53. The rational and understanding soul has the life as being, but it can also receive the opposite ones, namely the evilness and the kindness. From here it is shown the fact that the soul doesn't have the kindness as being⁷⁶⁷, as it doesn't have the evilness too as being, but it has some feature able to chose a side or another, when allowed. These ones aren't present in a space, but the understanding soul, by receiving from the Builder the power of deciding freely, it can lean towards one or another and so to live according to what he has chosen. That's why the rational and understanding soul is somehow composed, due to the mentioned work. This one is for another, it doesn't cause by itself the composition, but out of its being and out of a certain work from among the mentioned features which can be opposite to one another, namely out of virtues or of evilness.

⁷⁶⁶ The life of the body isn't the body's being, but it is a work irradiating out of the soul. That's why the body dies when the soul withdraws from within body. But the life of the animalic body doesn't come out of a soul of the animal, but it is an irradiation out of the life of that species, or out of the common life of the animals. That's why their soul doesn't last after their death. But the human soul belongs to the man's being. The human soul is individual or personal, and that gives a personal character to each of us. So, the human soul will exist in himself and for himself, even after our body dies.

⁷⁶⁷ We have been trying all the way to preserve the style of the original text. But here, though we have translated philologically, we think that *as being* could rather be *by nature* or *existentially*. (E. l. t.'s n.)

54. The highest mind, the highest good, that above-life and supra-godlike nature, because of not being able, by any means, to receive the opposite ones, it will be obvious that it has the kindness not as feature, but it has the kindness as being. That's why the whole good which somebody would be able to think at, it is in that Mind; better said, that Mind is above-good. And the life is in that Mind, better said that Mind Itself is the life. In that Mind is the wisdom too, better said that Mind Itself is the wisdom. This is for the wisdom is a good, and the wisdom in itself is the kindness. Likewise, the eternity, the happiness and, simply, all the good one could cogitate at. And it is not there a difference between life, and wisdom, and kindness, and the ones alike. This is for all of those are comprised within that kindness, concentratedly and unitarily and as simply as possible gathered, all of them; and out of all goods it is understood and it is named. The whole good one could cogitate and say about it, it is one and simple⁷⁶⁸. But it is not only what is truly cogitated by them who understand with their mind made wise by God and who speak with their tongue moved by the Ghost. But it is even above those ones too, as untold and non-understood; and nothing lacks to its above-nature unity and simplicity, by being a unique all-good and supra-good unity. Only that much is understood and it is called – and that only out of His works descending to the creation – that the Maker and the Master of the creation it is the all-king and supra-kind goodness, having the kindness as being. That's why it cannot receive, by any means, what is opposite to kindness. This is for, it neither is opposite to any being.

55. This all-king and supra-kind goodness (above-goodness) is the spring of the kindness. And this is a good and the highest good, one that cannot lack to the consummate kindness. And for the consummate and above-consummation kindness is Mind, what else could have been what comes out of that Mind as from a spring, except Word, and a Word which is unlike out uttered word? This is because, our word doesn't belong to our mind, but it belongs to our body as moved by our mind. Neither that Word is like our inwards word. This is because our inwards word too, it becomes a sound, and it gets

⁷⁶⁸ Here we have the strongest affirmation of the godlike simplicity, one contradicting the accusations brought to Palamas that he wouldn't maintain the godlike simplicity.

organized as through some images⁷⁶⁹. But it isn't either like the word form our cogitation, even if our word is soundless, being accomplished through incorporeal movements. This is because, this too is, according to us, and it needs pauses, namely not a few temporary pauses, by being unveiled widely, from a non-consummate beginning towards a consummate conclusion. This is for, it is like the word that has been planted in our nature and placed into our mind, ever since we have been created by The One Who has built us up in His image, namely like to the knowledge which always exists together with our mind⁷⁷⁰. This is for, this knowledge is there too, in the highest Mind of the consummate and above-consummation kindness, to which nothing is non-consummate, except the fact that that knowledge comes from that Mind, that knowledge is, without

⁷⁶⁹ The uttered words have also the meaning as "images" of the inwards word, but also as fixed, steadfast "types", used by the inwards word which combines them according to the meaning it wants to express and which is each time differently nuanced. The word used here by Saint Gregory Palamas it has both those meanings.

⁷⁷⁰ The Word Who is born out of the Father as Mind, it is not like the uttered word that it belongs to the body as moved by the mind, neither is like our inward word which tends towards expression, but it cannot do that except by using "images" which are, in the same time, "types" established by the human community, which each individual combines them each time differently, and which, as such, it crosses through a development when being expressed by a certain individual, and that needs interruptions, and it is not either like the word that is produced within mind and it is not allowed to be expressed, because this last word too, it is produced by us, and so it starts existing "after us". But the Word is like that "work" planted within our nature and, especially, within our mind, on the moment we were created, as a knowledge which the mind cannot be cogitated without; as a virtual knowledge continuously being actualized, of course that in connection with God and with the world, but without which the mind cannot be cogitated. In this quality, this word comprised in itself all the words, or the mind is endlessly speaking, for the mind is endlessly knowing, given the infiniteness of the reality and of the reality's possible combinations. The mind receives and produces, in the same time, the words. The mind, by being in connection with God and with the world, including its fellow humans, or by taking notice of those, the mind always expressed the knowledge that is always given. But our springing-of-words mind, it answers, in the same time, the appeals made to it, or it answers the words given to it in order to be known, in the first place to God Who is the ultimate and supremely challenging light out of Who the whole knowledge or all the answering words come from. The human word is dialogical, for we are dialogical beings, for we are created in order to understand the word of God gives us as reality, and in order to answer that word, so that we are created as partners of the dialogue with God, about and into God, with our fellow humans, about all the realities created by God, as unveilings of God's will which require us to become aware of them, as being His words which require us an answer, for we have been found worthy, by God, of the importance of an answered being waited for, from us, for our formation. The word in this sense, it is the ultimate basis of the uttered and thought words. There cannot be a mind or understanding subject, without word. In this meaning, the human subject, as understanding subject is, right through this a speaking subject.

diminution, everything that that Mind is too. That's why the higher Word is and He is called by us also as Son, in order us to recognize Him as consummate, in consummate and own hypostasis, as One Who is out of the Father and Who doesn't lack anything from the being of the Father, but He is, without diminution, One with That One, though not according to hypostasis. This shows the Word as being out of That One through a birth on a godlike way.

56. For the kindness that comes, through birth, out of the understanding kindness, as out of a spring that is the Word, and Word without Ghost cannot be imagine by anybody who has mind, that's why God-the Word Who is out of God, and He has proceeding out of the Father the Holy Ghost too. And this Ghost isn't like our ghost accompanying our word uttered with out lips, neither this Ghost is like that ghost that accompanies, even incorporeally, our inner word or our thought word. This is because, that one too, it still is a certain impulse of the mind, stretching over time and needing the same interruptions, and starting from what is non-consummate, towards consummation. That Ghost of the highest Word, it is like an untold love of the Birth-Giver towards the Word born in an untold manner. This One is used towards the Borth-Giver and the Word and the all-beloved Son, but like One Who has Him as together-come-out of the Father and resting within Him, through the unity of the being. From this Word Who also spoke to us through His body too, we learnt also the name of that Hypostasis different from the Father, namely of the Ghost, as also the fact that the Ghost doesn't belong only to the Father, but it belongs to the Word too. For he says: "The Ghost of the truth Who proceeds from the Father" (Jn. 15: 25). This is for, us to learn that not only the Word but the Ghost too is from the Father, not born, but proceeded, but also the Ghost belong to the Son too, for the Son has the Ghost from the Father, as Ghost of the truth, of the Wisdom, and of the Word. This is for, the Truth and the Wisdom are the appropriate Word of the Birth-Giver, a Word that rejoiced Himself together with the Father, according to what he said through Solomon: "I was that one who rejoiced together with Him". He doesn't say: I have rejoiced myself, but he says: we rejoiced together. This joy from before ages, of the Father and of the Son it is the Holy Ghost, as One Who is common to both of Them regarding the uses (that's why both of them send the Ghost to the worthy ones), but the

Ghost belongs only to the Father regarding the existence; and due to that the Ghost proceeds, as existence, only from the Father⁷⁷¹.

57. The image of this supreme love towards the knowledge that exists at it and in it, our mind created in the image of God it has it too. This is for, this love has been, since the beginning, from the mind and into the mind and together-going-out from the mind with the inwards word. The most limpid sign of this love, even to the who cannot see the inner realities of their own, it is the insatiable desire of the people for knowing⁷⁷². But in that archetype, in that consummate and above-consummation kindness, there nothing is consummate, because, beside the fact that is like the knowledge from within itself, the godlike love is without diminution, everything which that kindness is. That's why, this love is and it is called by us as Holy and Comforting Ghost, as one that accompanies the

⁷⁷¹ In this chapter it is comprised the famous teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas about the relation of the Holy Ghost with the Son. Saint Gregory undertook a step-forwards in explaining that relation. The Holy Ghost is tied to the Word or to the Son born out of the Father, for, by and large, the word isn't without love. The one who speaks, that one speaks in order to express her/his love for her/him whom her/he speaks to. The love means joy. The Father expresses His joy in the presence of the Son, by proceeding the Ghost towards the Son. The Father rejoices of the Son together with the Ghost, for, a, rejoicing of someone it will be full when that joy is shared by another too. But also, the Son rejoices of the Father together with the Ghost, and the Son's joy isn't a joy stranger to the joy of the Father. That's why neither the Person through Who and with Whom the Son rejoices of the Father, it isn't a Person differing from that Person Who and through Whom the Father rejoices of the Son. Still, in this rejoicing of One of Another, the initiative belongs to the Father. Then the Ghost as Person cannot proceed from Both the Father and the Son, because, if that had been the case, there would have been a distinct rejoicing of the Father of the Son, and of the Son of the Father. The Father rejoices of the Son in His quality as Father, and the Son rejoices of His Father in His quality as Son. In the Holy Ghost as joy, the Son never manifests Himself as Father, but only as Son. Therefore, the Ghost doesn't proceed from the Son. Saint Gregory Palamas remains to the strict personalistic conception about God, and in this teaching about the place with the Ghost proceeds from, also in this teaching about the place the Holy Ghost has between the Father and the Son, about the special relation the Ghost has with Each of Them.

⁷⁷² Our mind is, as well, in the image of the Father. This is for, together with its inward word that comes out of our mind, it comes also the mind's love for that word. Just in the desire of the mind for knowing, it is shown also the mind's knowledge or the mind's word, but also the mind's love for more knowledge. The desire for knowing has an infinite dimension, and so also the knowledge or the love for knowledge too, and that shows that to these ones it corresponds a reality infinite in its content (as Word) and in its eternity (as Ghost), infinite and always new, as only within persons it can be found, and not in the monotonous nature which can easily be reduced to some laws.

Word⁷⁷³. By this we know that He is consummate in own consummate hypostasis, and he doesn't lack nothing of the being of the Father, but He is, without any diminution, One with the Son and with the Father, though not according to hypostasis, for the hypostasis shows us the Ghost as proceeding from the Father in a godlike manner. Let's take heed, therefore, that there is only One God true and consummate in three true and consummate hypostases, and there isn't a threefold God – let that not be – but a simple God. This is for, the kindness isn't threefold, neither there is a trinity of goods, but the highest kindness if a Holy trinity, all-honored and all-worshipped, overflowing out of Himself towards Himself and without flowing out of Himself, being based on Himself from before ages in a godlike manner⁷⁷⁴; and by being borderless and by limiting alone on Himself and bordering all realities and extending Himself over all realities, and not letting any existence outside Himself.

58. The understanding and rational nature of the angels has a mind as well, a word out of mind, and the love of the mind for that word. This love, by being out of mind as well, and by always being with the word and with the mind, it could be called also a ghost, as one that accompanied, by nature, the word. But this ghost is not of-life-maker. This is because the angel hasn't received his body from God as created out of earth united with Himself, so that to receive for the body also a life-maker and upholding power⁷⁷⁵. But the understanding and rational nature of the soul, being built together with the earthly body, it has received from God the life-maker ghost which it keeps together through, and which it makes alive through, the body that is united with the soul⁷⁷⁶. Through this he is shown to them who understand that the man's ghost that makes the body alive, it is an understanding love, and that the ghost is

⁷⁷³ The true word is always accompanied by comforting, for it comforts the one whom it is addressed to, through the love tied to the word. Out of the mind starts both the word and the love tied to the word.

⁷⁷⁴ The godlike love flows out of itself towards itself and it has its foundation into itself.

⁷⁷⁵ Here Saint Gregory signals a difference between the human ghost and the angelic ghost. The angelic ghost is not of-life-giver and upholder of the angel, because of not having to give and to uphold a life into body. From here comes that there is a special connection between the ghost of the man and his bodily life.

⁷⁷⁶ We are noticing the great importance granted here to the matter. The matter is destined to be made alive through the ghost.

form the mind and it is of the word and the ghost is into word⁷⁷⁷ and into mind; and that the man has his word and his mind into ghost. This is for, the soul has, in a natural manner, through the ghost, such a great loving connection with his body, so that the ghost would never want to forsake his body, if there didn't come, forcedly, some sort of grave illness, or some hit from outside⁷⁷⁸.

59. The understanding and speaking nature of the soul, because is the only one having mind, word, and of-life-maker ghost, only the soul's nature has been built, more than that of the bodiless angels, in the image of God, by God. And the soul will be maintained untransformed, even if the soul doesn't know his worthiness and even if the soul doesn't cogitate and doesn't behave according to the image of the Builder. This one it has been preserved, even after the Adam's falling off Paradise through that tree, when we suffered before the bodily death, the death of the soul that is the soul's separation from God. Then we rejected the godlike likeness, but we didn't lose the image. So, the soul, by detaching himself from the tendency towards evilness, and by attaching himself, through love, to the Good One and by obeying Him through virtuous deeds and behaviors, the soul will be enlightened and beautified by Him, so that the soul becomes kind and obeying His advices and urges, and so the soul will receive from Him, again, the truly eternal life. By this, the body that is united with Him it will be made immortal too, and it will be imparted, at the appointed time, with the promised resurrection and with the eternal glory. But, if the soul doesn't reject the tendency towards evilness and the obedience to evilness, that brings the image of God to abomination that causes dishonor, the soul will estrange from God, and the soul will get far from God and from the true happiness and life. After the soul previously forsook God, the soul rightly is forsaken by The Good One too.

⁷⁷⁷ The ghost is into word. It is not a word without a of-life-maker ghost.

⁷⁷⁸ The ghost of the man is into mind and into word, or the mind and the word of the man are ghost. The ghost is the connection between mind and word. The ghost is itself the connection of love between mind and word. But the love represented by the ghost, it doesn't unite only the mind and the word, but it is extended upon the body too, and it united also the body with the mind and with the word. The body becomes alive and it is upheld into life through the ghost of the mind, or through the mind's love for the body. This love, one that united the Father with the Son, a love than can be also called as Their Ghost, it composes and it give life to the body of the Word, at the fulfilling of the time.

60. The trinitarian nature from after the supreme Trinity, by being made by the Trinity in His image, namely more mental (understanding) than others, and speaking and spiritual (and so it is the human soul), it must guard its level, namely to be only for God, to attach itself only to God and to obey only to God and to listen only to God; and to look only at Him and to get adorned with the memory and the uninterrupted contemplation and with the warmest and fieriest love for God. But this it attracts to itself, or, better said, it was attracting yore, the mysterious and untold shininess of that nature. If it does so, it will truly have the image and the likeness of God, by becoming full of grace, wise, and godlike, through that shininess. This is for, it learns through that, either if present in shown manner, or it is near in a hidden manner, as is rather now, to love God more than it loves itself, and to love its neighbor as it loves itself; and, consequently, it learns to know and to guard its worthiness and its level and to truly love on itself. This is for “he who loves the injustice, that will hate his soul” (Ps. 10: 5⁷⁷⁹). That one, by tearing apart and by breaking the image of God, he burdens himself with a passion resembling to those who pitifully tear apart their own bodies, and with an insanity that makes them insensitive. This is because, he destroys, without feeling it, and he pitifully tears apart his natural beauty, by insanely tearing apart the trinitarian and above-world adornment of his soul, adornment made whole through the inwards love. This is for what is more unjust, what is more destroying than not remembering somebody and not looking, uninterruptedly, at Him Who built him and Who adorned him in His image, at Him Who, by that, He gave him, as a gift, the power of the knowledge and of the love, and He abundantly overpoured the untold gifts and the eternal life, to them who use the knowledge and the love rightly⁷⁸⁰.

61. One of the biggest evils suffered by our soul, or, better said, the biggest evil amongst all evils, it is the union with the

⁷⁷⁹ In KJB we have: Ps. 11: 5: “The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 10: 5: “The Lord tries the righteous and the unbeliever; and on him who loves the injustice, His soul hates him.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁷⁸⁰ The trinity of the soul, as image of the supreme Trinity, it is maintained and it is deepened into likeness, by remaining in a connection of love with its trinitarian archetype, through the love that is within it (through the ghost). He who doesn’t do this, he will tear apart his trinitarian soul, by detaching the love from the word and the word from understanding (mind) and, by and large, by weakening and crooking the love from within his soul.

intelligible and causing-all-evils snake which has become a herald (an angel) of the evilness and, through his evil urge that it gave to the people. He is all the more low and worse than everything, for he lusted, because of his pride, to resemble himself in power to the Builder. He was forsaken by the Builder, and rightly so, as much as he forsaken That One. And he forsook Him insomuch, so that he reached to be opposant and enemy of That One. If, therefore, That One is living kindness and of-life-maker of the living ones kindness, without any doubt that this one is the death evilness⁷⁸¹ and of-death-maker evilness. That One, by having the kindness as being and for He is, by nature, non-receiver of what is contrary to kindness, namely of evilness, and therefore nothing that shares some evilness can come closer to Him, how much more won't he reject him who is the chieftain and the cause of the evilness in himself and in others? But the evil one, he doesn't have the evilness but the life as being. That's why he remains immortal by that. But by having this one able to receive the evilness too, and by being honored with having a free will, he was able to obey and to attach by himself to the eternal spring of the kindness and to be partaker to the true life. But because he willingly rolled himself down to evilness, he has deprived himself of the true life⁷⁸², not through being (because there is not a being of the death), but by rejecting the true life. But because of getting fed with the impulse towards evilness, and by increasing his evilness with great wickedness, he makes himself as of-death-maker ghost, striving to attracts the human being to his sharing with death.

62. Sneaking in behaviors and strong in cunningness, the mediator and the cause of the death, he dressed himself up into the cunning snake (because of not being able otherwise, at all, except through hallucination, because of fearing to be discovered). Because of not daring to start a direct dialogue, he

⁷⁸¹ The devil is called as the "death evilness" because of not being capable of moving himself towards anything good, so that he is petrified in his helplessness and unhappiness. He is incapable of anything new, and he poisons himself in monotony. He cannot see, at all, any new horizon.

⁷⁸² Though he has the live as being, so that he cannot lose his life, though, because of having in his life the possibility of the evilness, or of weakening his life, by putting the evilness into work, he has lost the true or full life. But he kept the life as such. By having the possibility of two sorts of life, of that life that is good or true, and of that life that is evil or weakened, and crooked and "dead", he has remained immortal in the second sort of life.

chose a cunning way, namely that way that he was able to hide himself better. And this was for, by showing himself as a friend, to unnoticeably sneak in the most shameful urges also through the foreign conversation (neither was the snake speaking, nor it showed before that it speaks), to get out of her mind, her who listen to the snake and to attract her to himself and to make her an easy-to-handle slave, for his plots. By disarming her thus, he made her obey the evil ones and to serve those over which she rightly received before the imperial power, for she alone was honored by the hand and by the word of God amongst all the creatures living in the world submitted to the senses and for she was made in the image of the Builder⁷⁸³. And God allows this, in order the man to see the advice he was urged to, by the evil one (for all the more is the snake evil than the man is!), and the man to limpidly understand that that advice isn't useful and the man to resist against obeying himself to what is obviously evil, and the man to keep his faith towards Builder, fulfilling the Builder's commandment. And so, the man to easily become defeater of that one that fell from the true life, and the man to rightly receive the happy immortality and the man to remain living according to God, forever.

63. Nothing is more superior within man that to think and to reckon, and by that him to know and to do what is useful; him to keep his level, to know on himself and to know the Only One Who is superior to him. Also, him to observe everything he has learnt from That One, and regarding the things he hasn't learnt from That One, him to want to take only That One as adviser. This is because the angels too, though they are above us, according to their worthiness, they serve the wills of That One for us, they being sent for them who will have inherited the salvation (Hebr. 1: 14); better said, not all of them,

⁷⁸³ He is speaking here about Eva, but also about the man as the sole creature made by God and placed as emperor over the world. The man was honored by the hand and by the word of God, for the man was made by the hand of God and after the godlike Persons spoke about the man, for the hand of God to be reflected in the man's body, and the speaking of the godlike Persons to be reflected into the speaking of the man with his fellow humans and with God. The hand is the expression of the rational and rational-transforming work. This work is reflected into the being of the man. Created as a person mastering upon things, the man is tempted by satan to become below things, obeying the things, and, through things obeying to satan. The deed of satan consisted of lowering us as persons on the level of objects obeying objects, and taken towards the lack of freedom, as the objects are; towards the lack of freedom and towards the corruptibility of the body, as the objects are corruptible, but also towards a living evilness like that of satan.

but only the best angels who kept their level. This is for, the angels too, they have mind, and word, and ghost, from God, all those three being together-grown. That's why, they owe to listen both to the creator Mind and to the Word and the Ghost, as we do. This is because, though the angels surpass us in many concerns, but related to others they are behind us, as we said and as we are going to say, for we are in the image of the Builder. In these regards, we were created more than the angels were, in the image of God.

64. The angels were ordered to strongly serve the Builder, and they received the purpose of being mastered. But they weren't appointed to master upon them who are below to angels, except they are sent by Him Who upholds everything. But satan lusted to master, with pride, against the decision of the Builder. That's why, by leaving his level accompanied by the angels who rebelled together with him, he was rightly forsaken by the spring of the true life and light, and he sunk into death and into the eternal darkness. And for the man was appointed not only to be mastered, but also in order to master over all the realities from on earth, the beginner of the evil, because of envying the man, he uses the whole his plotting to topple the man over from mastery. But because of not having the power to force the man, because satan is impeded to do that by the Master of all, Who built our speaking, free, and of-self-mastering nature, satan invites the people with cunningness, to listen to his advise and so to remove the man from mastery⁷⁸⁴. Thus, satan deceives – better said, he persuades – the people not to take in account and not to value, or even to disregard

⁷⁸⁴ The devil desiring tyranny, through his evilness, but because of being incapable of mastery due to his evilness, he wants to topple the man over from the man's level as master over the things, and over the world, namely from the man's level as subject. But God, as The One Who created the man free and only-master upon himself, He doesn't want that. God wants the man to be free, sole-master upon himself, and master upon things, but not a tyrant upon persons. This is for God wants that all persons to be free and sole-masters upon themselves. And being this freedom sown within us by the will of God, we can maintain it only in personal communion with our fellow humans and with God as supreme spring of the love in free communion. The man defends, at his turn, this freedom of his. One cannot take this freedom from us except by deceiving us to commit deed which seemingly affirm our freedom, but those deeds actually take our freedom away from us. The evil uses an equivocal, a mask. The evil doesn't have the power to deceive us in an unveiled manner. This cunningness is used by the evil, when he deceitfully whispers to us that, by disobeying the commandments of God to not make ourselves slaves to the non-spiritual sweetness of the nature, we will become freer than we are, free like God Himself is.

and to resist and to do what is contrary to the commandment and to the advice of the All-Kind One. Thus, by sharing ourselves the rebellion of satan, we will also share the darkness and the eternal death.

65. The fact that the speaking soul is sometimes killed too, despite having the existence as life⁷⁸⁵, we have been taught so by the great Paul, who write: "The widow that spends her time in delectations, though she is alive, she is dead" (1 Tim. 5: 6). For Paul said that about the present theme too, namely about the speaking soul, it is not wrong us to affirm that. This is because, that soul that is deprived of the spiritual Bridegroom, if that soul doesn't get sad and doesn't cry and doesn't choose that narrow and difficult life of the repentance, though that soul is alive (for, according to the being, the soul is immortal), that souls will have died. This is because that soul is able both to die the bad death and to live the good life. Despite the Apostle said his teaching about that widow missing the bodily bridegroom, that she parties and that she lives according to her body, he surely understood that her died according to her soul. But, in the same place, the same one says: "This is because, by being us dead through sins, God has made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2: 5). What else says he who tells us: "It is sin towards death" (1 Jn. 5: 16). But, also our Lord, by commanding somebody to "let the dead to bury their dead" (Mt. 9: 22), He showed us the undertakers who live according to their body, while they are dead according to their soul.

66. The proto-parents of the mankind, by willingly getting out from the remembrance of God and from seeing God, and by disregarding God's commandment, and on the other hand, by uniting themselves in their thinking, with the dead ghost of satan, and by eating from the forbidden tree, and so they doing the opposite to the will of the Builder, they were disrobed of their luminous and of-life-maker vestments of the shininess from above, and they became, woe to them, like satan, dead with their ghost. And because satan not only he is dead, but he

⁷⁸⁵ The existence of the soul isn't a simple existence, but it is life. Or, the man's life is one with the man's existence of with the man's being. Still, the soul's life can be killed too, and so to become a dead life. But the soul won't cease to exist, or even to live, with a weakened and deluded conscience, once the life is the soul's existence or the soul's being.

is also ghost that kills them who get close to him⁷⁸⁶, and they who shared his dead they had a body too, which the death-maker advice was committed through, with the deed, these ones pass, woe to them, within their bodies too, those dead ghosts and or-death-maker ghosts of the killing⁷⁸⁷. Consequently, the human body would have been detached immediately, and it would have turned back into the earth which the body was takes from, if they hadn't been retained, through a greater care and power, by Him Who can do everything with His word only, by that power that nothing is committed without, amongst all the committed ones. But that decision still is being fulfilled, rightly, and continuously. This is for "right is the Lord, as the godlike psalmist says, and he loves the righteousness" (Ps. 10: 7⁷⁸⁸).

67. God didn't make the death (Prov. 1: 8), and He even impeded death to appear, insomuch it was necessary and insomuch as it was right to impede death to them who were created by Him, as they were endowed with a free will, by Him. This is for, He gave them in advance, an advice causing immortality, and a commandment which He ensured with, in advance, His of-life-giver advice. Tis is for, He announced in advance, plainly and menacingly, by declaring that disregarding that commandment that was life-giving, it meant death. This, in order they to be guarded against experiencing the death, either by love, or by knowledge, either by fear. This is for God loves, He knows, and He can accomplish everything that is useful to each one amongst creatures. If He only had known but He hadn't loved, He might have not fulfilled but He would have left non-as consummate what He had know as good. And if He had not known while loving, or if He hadn't been able to accomplish, it might have been even without Him willing it, that what He had love and what He has known, that would have remained unaccomplished. But because He loves and He knows and He

⁷⁸⁶ Out of him who is dead with his soul, it irradiated the death, out of him who is weakened, disgusted, envious, desperate, all of these irradiate too. All the more out of satan, whom all of these are within, in a culminant thought.

⁷⁸⁷ Out of the discouraged, envious, disgusted, full of hatred, there passes into the body as well, a state of sadness, of burden, of weakness, of unhealable drowsiness, all of these bringing and maintaining death.

⁷⁸⁸ In KJB we have: Ps. 11: 7: "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright."; in ROB we have: Ps. 10: 7: "For right is the Lord and He loved the righteousness and His face looks at the righteous one." (E. l. t.'s n.)

can accomplish what is useful to us, what comes from Him even without our will, it will be beneficial to us. Regarding that what we willingly hurry ourselves up towards, for we have been imparted with a free will, let's pay much attention to that lest it be useless to us. And especially so, when by the care of God, a certain thing is forbidden to us, as it was, for instance, in Paradise, or in the Gospel of our Lord by Himself, or amongst the descendants of Israel by prophets, it is proven that that thing is towards everything that can be more useless and more corruptive. And if somebody invites us to that evilness and urges us to hurry up towards that, by persuading us with words, or by attracting us through a loving countenance, it will be clear to us that one who does that, he is opposite and enemy to our life.

68. We should have not let ourselves deceived back then - either through the longing to life Planted within us by Him (for why He had made us alive, if He would have not loved that in a special manner?), or by knowing that That One knows better what is beneficial to us (for how wouldn't the Lord of the knowledge have known that, incomparably more, for He shared us the knowledge?), or by fearing His almighty mastery -, neither bewitched, nor persuaded, so that we wouldn't have disregarded His commandment and advice, as we shouldn't disregard nowadays too, His savior commandments and advices He has given us after that first commandment. This is because, as today, they who do not decide to valiantly resist the sin, and so they disregard the godlike commandment, they go towards what is opposite, namely towards the inward and eternal death, if they do not gain back their soul through repentance, they will do alike to our proto-parents, who didn't resist them who were urging them to disobey, and so they disregarded the commandment and, consequently, they actualize that decision that was announced, in advance, by Him Who judges everything righteously. And according to that decision, they who ate from that tree, they died immediately. Thus, they knew as a real fact, what the commandment they forgot consisted of, of the truth, of the love, of the wisdom, and of the power, and, because they were ashamed, they hid themselves, because they were disrobed of that glory that makes alive, in a higher mode, even the

immortal ghosts, a glory without the life of the ghost is and it is reckoned without, as much worse than several deaths⁷⁸⁹.

69. The fact that was not the time to be benefit out of eating out of that tree, it is shown by him who says: "This is because, that tree was only a vision, as I reckon. And only they who are consummate in habituation, only they can get close to such vision, without endangering themselves. It is not good to them who still are simple and greedy in their lust, to get close to that vision; as the full food isn't beneficial to them who still are tender and who need milk". Even if somebody doesn't want to move that tree and the food from that tree on a higher meaning, it won't be too difficult, as I reckon, us to see that it still wasn't useful, that food, to our proto-parents, because they weren't consummate. This is because, it seems to me that they looked at that tree with their senses, and they ate out of that tree, for it was the sweetest tree amongst the trees from Paradise. And that food that is the sweetest to our senses, it isn't really good, neither is always good, nor is good to everyone. But it is good only to them who can use that food without letting themselves overwhelmed; and they to eat that food only when they should and on a needed measure and towards the glory of the ones who made that food. And that food won't be good to them who cannot use it thus. That's why I reckon too, that that tree was called as the tree of knowing the good and the evil, for it is characteristic to them who are consummate, and to the virtue, to look at the things which are pleasant to the senses, while still not removing their mind from contemplating God and from the praises and from the prayers towards That One, but they make out of those things a matter and a starting point of their stretching towards God, while they master their pleasure according to the senses all the way up to the end, by moving their mind towards the higher realities⁷⁹⁰. These ones, even if they have that unusual, great, and surprising – because they are not used to it – pleasure, they do not empty their soul's thought towards that evilness, unlike they who reckon them who reckon that pleasure as good and they totally allow themselves to be conquered by it.

⁷⁸⁹ The full life is one with the glory, for it has power of irradiation.

⁷⁹⁰ Those which are tempting to them who are not strengthened into virtue, those are tempting for these ones aren't accustomed to the virtue. They who are strengthened into virtue, they see the pleasant realities too, as images of the glory of God.

70. It would have been useful to our proto-parents, therefore, who ought to live in that holy place, to not ever forget about God at all, and to occupy themselves at length and to get themselves accustomed more with the simple and truly good things and to get consummate in their habituation to the souly sight. By still being non-consummate and by still being in the middle and by being easily tempted by their power - given to them in order they to use it - here towards good and there towards evil, they shouldn't have passes to trying the things which can be attractive by nature and which can lay mastery over senses and which can gain the whole mind and which can lead to evil deeds and to present them as worthy of trust the chieftain and the cause of such passions having their beginning, according to him, in the passionate feeding with sweet foods. This is because, if by only seeing that tree, according to the story, it made the snake as worthy to be accepted and believed as adviser, how much more will do that the eating until satiation? Is it clear, now, that it wasn't useful to our proto-parents to eat out of that tree through their senses? Ought they not, therefore, to be removed from the Paradise of God, as ones who ate out of that tree before the right time, so that they not to make that place a place for advice towards evil and towards accomplishing the evil? Shouldn't have had they to immediately receive the death because of transgressing the commandment? But our Master had great patience.

71. The decision regarding the death of the soul, that came to fulfillment by transgressing the commandment, according to the justice of the Builder (because, us by forsaking Him, without Him making us to do that, He too left us, as ones who had free will), it was heralded in advance, by God, with love for people, for the reasons I mentioned. To it He added and placed in addition, that decision regarding the death of the body. But by uttering this one, for the deep of His wisdom and for the abundance of His love for people, He delayed reinforcing it, for the future. He didn't say to Adam: "you turn back where you were taken from", but: "dust you are, into dust you will turn back". They who listen with understanding, they can see into these words too, that God didn't make the death of the soul, neither made He the death of the body. For God didn't say before, by commanding: "you will die on that day that you eat", neither He said: "go back to dust!", but God said: "you will go

back”, foretelling and allowing what was to happen and not impeding that, because of the righteousness.

72. So, our proto-parents were to reach to death, as death waits for us too, us who are still living. Our body has become mortal. This is like a prolonged death, or, better said, like a chain of countless successive deaths, one after another, until all of us will reach that one and ultimate and lasting death. This is because we are born towards corruption; and, by appearing into life, we are getting disintegrated until we will cease to exist⁷⁹¹. We won't ever be truly the same, even if we seem so to them who do not notice our constant changing. Like de fire, by grabbing the thing reed by an end, and constantly being different, as measure of its existence the fire has the length of the reed, likewise are we who change, we have as measure the portion of life we are given with.

73. And in order us not to be totally nescient regarding His overwhelming love for people, and regarding His deep of wisdom, namely regarding the reason why God added the end by death, God given the man, as a gift, to keep living for a while. So, He showed us that He educated us mercifully, better said He planned out education through justice, in order us not to totally despair. By that, he has given us time for repentance, and for making ourselves well-pleasant to Him, by living a life which He allows us existing for⁷⁹². He then comforted the sadness of the death with the ceaseless births. He multiplied the generation through descendants, so that the multitude of the born ones to largely exceed the multitude of the dead. Instead of Adam who ended to be burdened and miserable through the beauty of a sensitive tree, God showed many happily enriched out of the things submitted to the senses with the knowledge about God, by virtue and by godlike benevolence. Witnesses are: Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noah, Melchisedec, and

⁷⁹¹ “Εν τῷ φθείρεσθαι γινόμεθα”. The German philosopher Heidegger said that we exist towards death – “Sein zum Tode”, and that's the same thing. Only that Heidegger doesn't go all the way up to the last explanation for that. Our existence is towards death, because it occurs in a state of corruption that advances to death. We are continuously dying with our body, once we are born, until the full and durable death of our body. And this happened because we no longer exist in communion with the existence existent by itself, namely imperishable. But we are not only “existence towards death”, but also existence towards a spiritual growth.

⁷⁹² Even in the death that comes after a long process, God placed an educative power, and in this educative signification it is shown to the man a motif for hoping for the care of God for us.

Abraham, and all the people from between those, and from before them, and from after them, or nigh to them. But, because regardless how big or how many were those, none of them survived consummately without sin, in order to be able to overcome that defeat of our proto-parents, and to heal the wound of the root of the mankind, and to be towards holiness to all the people from later on, towards blessing and towards regaining the life, and He saw that in advance, He chose during time those nations and tribes which Him to erect the all-praised stem from (Num. 17: 23), which that flower to spring out, that flower which the savior oikonomia was to be fulfilled by, for the whole mankind⁷⁹³.

74. Oh, the deep of the richness (Rom. 11: 33) and of the love for people, of God! If that death (of Christ) hadn't existed, and if before that death there hadn't been mortal our mankind who came out of such a root, we actually haven't been enriched with the first fruit of the immortality; and we wouldn't have been called to heavens; and our nature wouldn't have been enthroned on the right hand of the heaven's glory, above all mastery and power (Hebr. 8: 1). So knew God to change, with His love for people, our transgression caused by our willing deviation, and to transform them towards good, by His wisdom and power⁷⁹⁴.

75. Maybe many people blame Adam because, by letting himself easily persuaded by the evil adviser, Adam transgressed the godlike commandment and, by that transgression, Adam caused us the death. But it is not the same thing, somebody wanting to taste before actually trying it, a deadly weed, and somebody wanting to eat that weed even after knowing it as

⁷⁹³ Itself the history with its multitude of people and of nations, it shows that the man isn't a passing and despised by God creation. Out of the history's whole contribution, it was prepared and it was born the Son of God as man (Rut, as representative of other nations) and with the whole history's contribution it is actualized what Christ gave and is giving as embodied God to the mankind. Through all the people, each man is enriched, especially into Christ.

⁷⁹⁴ Saint Gregory Palamas proved himself to be the follower of the opinion that, if we hadn't fallen, the Son of God wouldn't have embodied Himself and our nature wouldn't have ever been elevated, through Him, on the heavenly throne so that we to be made partakers to His glory. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, during the XVIII Century, he expressed his opinion that our nature still would have been elevated if we hadn't fallen, to a glory like that achieved by Christ. But it seems that this isn't the last word belonging to Saint Gregory Palamas on this matter; or, we must not understand this word in a too simplistic manner, given the coat of glory which Palamas sees the human nature dressed up in the beginning.

deadly. It is more reproachable him who takes poison knowingly, than him who does that unknowingly. That's why, each of us is more reproachable and more condemnable than Adam. But one could say that that tree isn't in front of us, neither is given to us the commandment of God forbidding us to taste out of that tree. It may be that that tree isn't in front of us, but the commandment of God is still being in front of us now, and they who obey that commandment and who want to live according to it, they are untied of the guilt of all their sins and of the curse and of the ancestral condemnation; but they who disregard the commandment and who choose instead of the commandment, the bait and the advice of the evil one, they cannot but fall off that life and from living into Paradise, and they will reach the Gehenna of the eternal fire, which we have been menaced with.

76. So, which is the commandment of God that stays in front of us? It is the repentance, which requires us, in the first place, not to touch the forbidden ones any longer. This is because, we have been cast off the place of the godlike delectation and cast out, rightly so, from the Paradise of God, and because we have fallen into this precipice and we have been condemned to dwell and to live together with the speechless beasts, and we have lost the hope for turning back into Paradise by our power, so Himself Who brought upon us the condemnation, back then, or, better said, He allowed it, rightly, to come upon us, He has descended now to us, due to the overwhelming abundance of His love for people and of His kindness, and due to the lenience of His mercy; and by deigning to make Himself man as we are, but in sinless mode, in order to teach and to save the same one through the same one⁷⁹⁵, He

⁷⁹⁵ The Son of God communicates us His savior power through our human nature assumed by Him. He has impropriated to Himself, as man, His godlike power, and then He conveyed that power to His brothers into humanity, by entering, as man, the communion with us, and bringing into this communion the whole godlike plenitude. No one can be healed of an illness by using a medicine that is not made endurable to him, namely by using a medicine that his organism cannot assimilate and use. Into Christ the humanity endures the savior godlike power (and also the cross), for the Son of God fits on Himself to this human nature, by becoming its Subject. And thus, Christ saves the human nature not forcedly, but for the human nature itself becomes a constitutive part of His Subject, a Subject that works upon the human nature with the godlike power made endurable to the man through the human form which the man is offered that power into. And through the Son of God become man, we are not submitted, forcedly, to a superior Subject, or better said to a Supreme Subject, but the godlike Subject makes Himself partner to us, into a relation of maximum communication.

brought us the savior advice and commandment of the repentance, by saying: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heavens is nigh” (Mk. 1: 15). This is because, before the embodiment of the Word of God, the Kingdom of Heavens was as far from us as the sky is from earth. But, by coming to us the Emperor of the Heavens, and by deigning to receive the union with us, the Kingdom of Heavens has come nigh to all of us⁷⁹⁶.

77. Once the Kingdom of Heavens has come close to us, by the descent of God-the Word to us, let’s no longer get ourselves far from it, by living without repentance. Let’s rather run away from the unhappiness of them who sit into darkness and into the shadow of the death (Isa. 9: 2); let’s gather the deeds of the repentance, humble cogitation, humiliation and spiritual crying, gentle and full of mercy heart, a loving of righteousness heart, a loving of cleanness heart, a peaceful heart, a peace-maker heart, a hearts that is patient in toils, a heart that is joyful in persecutions, in losses, in reproaches, in gossips, and in sufferings for truth and righteousness. This is for, the Kingdom of Heavens, better said the Emperor of the Heavens, oh, untold and great generosity, He is inside us (Lk. 17: 21). We owe to always attach ourselves, as much as possible, to Him, through the deed of our repentance, for He loved us so much.

78. The love for God is upheld by our lack of passions and by our richness in virtues. This is for, our hatred on the evil ones, from which it comes the lack of passions, it brings, in exchange, the longing for and the richness of virtues. And he who loves and gains the virtues (the goods), how could he not love especially the Master Who is good through Himself, and Who is the Only One giving and guarding the whole good, that He is into, in a special manner⁷⁹⁷. This is for, Christ Himself

⁷⁹⁶ Here we have a meaning of the imperial dignity of Christ, one not developed in Dogmatics. Christ becomes, also as man, the Emperor of the Heavens, and so He makes us too as emperors. The Kingdom of Heavens is into Christ Himself. This is for, all the goods we are going to have in an unfolded manner, those goods are within Him in a folded manner. The happiness of the Kingdom of Heavens cannot but have its spring only into God as Person Who has come in communion with us. In loving relation with God as full of endless love Person, it is the whole our happiness and the whole power of our loving relation with the others. By making Himself man, He has made Himself accessible to us with His endless love, in an unmediated relation.

⁷⁹⁷ The spiritual goods are one with the virtues, namely to the habits of doing the diverse kinds of good. That’s why, when one speaks about goods, one can understand the virtues, and vice versa. This is for, the spiritual goods become truly ours when we assimilate them as

said: “He who remains into love, he remains into God and God remains into him” (1 Jn. 4: 18). But not only the love for God is born out of virtues, but also the virtues are born out of the love for God⁷⁹⁸. That’s why, also out Lord says once in the Gospel: “He who has My commandments and keeps them, that one loves Me” (Jn. 14: 21); and at some other time: “He who loves Me, he will keep My commandments” (Jn. 14: 23). That’s why, neither the deeds of the virtues are worthy of being praised, nor useful, to them who do them without love, nor it is worthy the love without deeds⁷⁹⁹. Amongst these, the first thing is shown in details by Paul, when he writes to the Corinthians: “If I do these and these, but I do not have love, I won’t benefit anything” (1 Cor. 13: 3). And the other thing is shown by the especially loved disciple, saying: “Let’s love not only with the word, neither with the tongue, but with the deed and with the truth” (1 Jn. 3: 18).

79. The supreme and all-worshipped Father is the Father of the Truth through Himself, namely of the Only Begotten Son. And as Ghost of the Truth, He has the Holy Ghost, as the Word of the Truth showed before. Consequently, they who honor the Father into These Ones and who believe so, staying under the work of These Ones (for “The Ghost is – says the apostle – The One Whom we worship and pray through” (1 Cor. 12: 3); and “No one comes to the Father except through Me” (Jn. 12: 6), says The Only Begotten Son of God)), namely them who honor

steadfast habits, through our toils. But in them is Christ Himself. This is for, He has all of them assimilated into Him, in a culminant manner, and so, out of Him it irradiated within us their power, or our power for them, and this power is spiritual sweetness too, and happiness too, for us and for others. That person who is steadfastly kind and strengthened into virtue, that person manifests her/his kindness through the irradiation of her/his kindness towards others. The virtue is the mode of the generous existence, of that existence that is open for others, unlike the passions that is the mode of the egotistic existence. Through the good that irradiated out of somebody towards somebody else, himself penetrates the another. Through His virtues, which become spring of power to our virtues, Christ Himself crosses into us and dwells within us.

⁷⁹⁸ The virtues culminate into love, as the culminant stage of the generosity. But the virtues themselves, as forms of the generosity, couldn’t have been able to occurs within us, if the virtues hadn’t been upheld by the impulse towards generosity.

⁷⁹⁹ The love without steadfast deeds strengthened into virtues, it won’t be a true love, neither the deeds without love will be deeds capable of transforming us, but they will remain appearances and sporadic gestures, without an internal substance, without the consistent and durable warmth, without the attachment to the one whom they are addressed to. They let him who commits them, still isolated and cold.

thus, into Ghost and Truth, the All-High Father, these ones are the true worshippers (Jn. 4: 24)⁸⁰⁰.

80. God is Ghost and they who worship Him, they ought to worship Him into Ghost and Truth (Jn. 4: 23), namely incorporeally understanding Him Who is incorporeal. This is for thus they truly see That One Who is everywhere, into His Ghost and Truth⁸⁰¹. This is for, God exists as Ghost, so that He is incorporeal; and what is incorporeal it is not in space, neither it is restrained by spatial borders. So, he who says that we must worship God in a certain place amongst all the places on earth and in the sky, he doesn't speak the truth, neither he worships into truth. As incorporeal, God is nowhere, but as God, He is everywhere. This is because, if that had been a border or a place, or a creature, where hadn't been God there, then God would have been fenced Himself into a certain place. So, God is everywhere, for He is borderless. How is He everywhere? As The One Who isn't comprised by a part, but as being Him comprised by the whole? No, for, if that had been the case, God would have also been body. Therefore, He Who keeps and comprises everything, he is in Himself, everywhere and above-everything, worshipped by the true worshippers into His Ghost and Truth.

81. The angels and the soul, by being incorporeal, they aren't in a certain place, but neither they are everywhere. This is because, they do not uphold everything, but they need Him Who upholds them. Consequently, they too are within Him Who upholds and comprises everything, they being bordered by Him

⁸⁰⁰ The Son is the Truth, for He is the expressed, or revealed, knowledge. But He is Person in the same time. The Person is truer than any other reality, through the own consistency. This is for the person knows the things, the person finds out and multiplies the things' meanings, and the person gathers the things' meaning and the knowledge related to them and the persons communicates those endlessly. The person as such is an abyssal, inexhaustible reality. That's why the Supreme Truth is the Supreme Person. But the Person, like Supreme Truth expressed or revealed, it born out of the Person Who is the supreme Principle-Person, the supreme-source-Person. But the Person Who endlessly communicated the truth revealed by Himself, He has within Himself also the Ghost as life. And this Life is Person too, for the true and inexhaustible life cannot be but a Person. In the supreme Truth and in the supreme Life, as Persons, Whom He communicated us and Who communicate Themselves to us, we know the Person Who revealed Them to us and Who is revealing Them to us. In these ones we must worship the source-Person, namely the Father.

⁸⁰¹ It is being affirmed here, again, the fact that wherever we are, we are in connection with The Truth as Person and with The Life as Person, namely with the Son and with the Holy Ghost, and we worship Their Father, namely we bring to God the true worshipping.

in a corresponding manner⁸⁰². The soul, by upholding the body which the soul has been built into, it is everywhere within that body, but not as in space, neither as being comprised, but like something that upholds that body it comprised that body, and it make that body alive, by being in this regard too, in the image of God⁸⁰³.

82. The man was made in the image of God more than the angels were, not only because the man has in himself an upholding and of-life-maker power, but also for the mastery. This is for, in the nature of our soul there is, on one hand, the mastering and leading side, and on the hand, there is the serving and obeying side⁸⁰⁴, namely: the will, the lust, the feeling and, simply: all the one which were together-built by God with the mind according to the Mind, even though us, through a sinful reckoning, we oppose ourselves not only to God-All-Keeper, but also to the Ruler sown into our nature. God, for the mastery power from within us, He gave us the mastery upon the whole earth too. But the angels do not have a yoked body, in order to have that body yoked to their mind. The will of the mind (understanding) reached to be, in the fallen angels, as ceaselessly evil; and within the good angels it is ceaselessly good, not needing at all a driver to hold the reins. The evil one hadn't had an earthly mastery but he stole it. From here it is obvious that the evil one was not made as master of the earth. And the good angels have been appointed by the All-Keeper to supervise the things from on earth after our falling from that mastery and because of that mastery, though our mastery hasn't been taken away totally from us, due to the love for people of God. This is for, the borders of the angels, as Moses says in his song, were set up by God after He divided the nations (Deut. 32: 8). And this kingdom was made after Cain and Seth, the descendants of Cain being called humans, and

⁸⁰² God can be contemplated everywhere and in anything, but by surpassing every created reality. This is for everything is upheld within Him. One cannot say the same thing regarding the angel. The angel can be reckoned as being within God, as the man is too; or God being within him.

⁸⁰³ The fact that we have a body, it might also be a help in interrupting the evil we commit. This is because, the wallowing into the bodily pleasures may cause a disgust too, to that man who feels himself superior through spirit. Also, the rebellion of the body can cause also a will of the spirit (of the mind) for controlling the body.

⁸⁰⁴ Likewise, the soul can be contemplated all over within the body, but by surpassing what is material into the body. The soul is contemplated as ruler, through some powers, and like obedient through some other powers.

the descendants of Seth being called as son of God (Gen. 6: 2). And it seems to me that the name was chosen back then, and it was heralded the nation out of which the Only Begotten Son was to take His body.

83. Somebody could say that, in addition to many others, the threefold kind of our knowledge too, it shows us more than the angels are, in the image of God, not only for it is threefold, but also for it comprises all kinds of knowledge. This is for only us, amongst all the creature, we have, in addition to the mental (understanding) and rational knowledge, also that knowledge out of senses. Proper to rationality it was to contrive the craftsmanships, the sciences, and the knowledge, to work the field, to build up and to bring in sight new things out of the existing things, but not out of the realities which do not exist at all. This is because, bringing realities to existence, out of nothing, it belongs only to God⁸⁰⁵. Only this work God gave it, as a gift, to the people and only to the people. This is for the man doesn't create anything totally anew, and neither is broken anything of what God created. But, by mixing something with another thing from those which are around us, the mind brings to sight another shape. Also, God gave only to the people, as a gift, that the unseen word of the mind not only to be left by hearing as the combination with the air, but also to be written and to be seen as body through body. By that, God gave a durable assurance about the coming and the showing of the Highest Word, through body⁸⁰⁶. None of these was given to the angels.

84. But despite we have been having until today, within us, the image of God, more than the angels have it, we haven't remained in the likeness of God, especially we aren't now in the image of God way lower than the angels are. Letting the other aspects aside, the consummation into the likeness of God, it is done through the godlike illumination from God, which the evil

⁸⁰⁵ The work of the rationality has, according to Saint Gregory Palamas, a practical character, or, at least related to the seen world. That's why, even the artistical creations which bring in sight new shapes, they are related, according to him, to rationality. The characters created in literature, the new melodies, the new images in painting, the new shapes in sculpture etc. are produced out of non-existing realities, but not in an absolute mode. This is for, there are used in "creating those", the elements given into the seen world.

⁸⁰⁶ Saint Gregory sees in the word of the mind that always takes a heard and seen image through the body, also a permanent example for the possibility of the Word of the Father to embody Himself.

angels are deprived of, and because of that they reached under darkness (Jude 1: 6), but the godlike minds (the good angels) are full of likeness of God, and that's why they are called too, as the second light and as the irradiation out of the first light. I reckon this is a known fact to all of them who read consciously and skillfully the instilled Scriptures of God. Consequently, the good angels have also the knowledge of the realities submitted to the senses, but they do not perceive those realities through a power of the senses and natural, but through a godlike power, which nothing of the sensitive realities can be hid out of, regardless in what manner, present, past, and future⁸⁰⁷.

85. They who are imparted with this illumination and who have this illumination to some extent, they have the knowledge of the creatures according to that extent too⁸⁰⁸. The fact that the angels too are imparted with that light, and that is uncreated, and also that that light isn't the godlike being, it is a known fact to all of them who zealously read the apostles and the speakers about God, the wisemen of God. But they who cogitate the contrary things, they blaspheme this godlike illumination, by saying about it either that it is creature, or that is being of God. When they say that that light is creature, they do not admit that that light is the light of the angels⁸⁰⁹. Let be present the speaker of God from Areopagus, for he briefly clarifies these three aspects: "By moving in a circle, the godlike minds are united with the without-beginning illuminations of the beautiful and of the good". The fact that "godlike minds" he called the good angels, it is obvious to everyone. But speaking at plural about illuminations, he differentiated them from the being of God, for the being of God is one and totally undifferentiated. Finally, by calling them "without beginning and without end", what did he show else than they are uncreated?

⁸⁰⁷ Full of godlike illumination, the angels see the sensitive realities too. Also, the angels received from God also a mastery upon the earthly realities, after that mastery was partially lost by people.

⁸⁰⁸ The godlike illumination gives not only the knowledge about the heavenly realities, but also about the creatures, by making transparent their godlike foundation, their endless meanings which have been from ever within God.

⁸⁰⁹ If the sole godlike light is the created knowledge of the creatures, that light won't be able to be a light of the angels too. This is because we have this light directly, more than the angels have it. If that had been the case, the angels would have been living into darkness.

86. The Word of God, by having mercy on our naked nature that was disrobed of this godlike illumination and shininess, through the ugliness of the falling, and by taking out nature upon Himself, for His deep mercy, he showed it to the chiefs of the disciples on Mount Tabor, again and more beautifully dressed up a nature. He showed then what were yore and what we will be in the future age through Him, if we decide to live here, as much as possible, as He lived, that John with the golden tongue says⁸¹⁰.

87. To this illumination and shininess being Adam partaker before falling, he was not naked, for he was dressed up into a vestment of true glory. And one couldn't say in words how much more was Adam more adorned by that glory in comparison to them who cover their heads with diadems adorned with much gold and with precious stones⁸¹¹. This illumination and this godlike grace are called by the great Paul as our heavenly abode, saying: "That's why by sighing, we desire to be us dressed up in our heavenly abode, so that we will be found dressed up and not naked" (2 Cor. 5: 203). The earnest of this godlike illumination and of its vestment, it was received by Paul himself from God, when Paul went from Jerusalem to Damascus, I to say that together with Gregory the Theologian, on that moment when, before being cleaned up of persecutions, he spoke to the persecuted One. Better said, Paul received the small candle of the great light.

88. The godlike supra-being is never called at plural; but the grace and the godlike work of God, by being shared undividedly, it is in the image of the solar ray that illuminated, it warms up, it gives life and growth, it sends its shininess to them who are illuminates by it, and it shows itself to the eyes which look at it. According to this unsatisfactory example, the godlike work too, it is called by the speakers-about-God, not as being one but many. So says the Great Basil: "And the works of the Ghost, which are they? They are untold for their greatness and countless for their multitude. This is because, how could we understand the realities which are beyond ages? Which were His works from before the creation known with the mind, and

⁸¹⁰ In order to understand this chapter, one has to take in account also the affirmation from the chapter no. 54 of Saint Gregory Palamas, that, without the falling of Adam, our nature wouldn't have been filled up with the whole godlike glory.

⁸¹¹ Here is involved the idea that the man would have reached the full glory even if the man had not fallen.

beyond ages (this is for the ages too, they are creatures known with the mind"⁸¹², nobody has ever said of thought that it was created". So, the powers and the works of the godlike Ghost are uncreated, being undividedly different from that One and totally undivided Being of the Ghost.

89. The uncreated work of God, undividedly divided, it is shown at plural by the speakers-about-God, as the Great Basil showed it too. So, because neither the illumination and the godlike grace are being, but they are work of God, that's why is communicated not only in time but also at plural, being given, as gift, on the measure of them who are imparted with it, and bringing with it, according to eth worthiness of them who receive it, more or less, the deifying shininess.

90. Isaias called these works as seven, for at Jews seven means many. "It will be raised, he says, a staff from the root of Jesse and a flower will bud up out of it; and seven ghosts will rest upon Him: the ghost of the wisdom, the ghost of the understanding, the ghost of the knowledge, the ghost of the right-faithfulness, the ghost of the advice, the ghost of the strength, and the ghost of the fear" (Isa. 11: 2-3). They who cogitate as the heretics do, they will insanely affirm that these sevens ghosts are created. I have enough combated these ones in the *Antirrhetics* composed, in detail, against them⁸¹³. But, also Gregory the Theologian, by mentioning these godlike works of the Ghost, he says that Isaias liked to call the works of the Ghost as ghosts⁸¹⁴. Besides, himself being the greatest voice amongst prophets, he limpidly showed not only the difference between these godlike works and the godlike being, by using the number, but he also showed them as uncreated, by saying that they are resting themselves. This is for, resting is characteristic to a higher dignity. So, what could be they creatures like, they whoa re resting upon the Lord's body which He has taken it from us?

91. Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke, He was casting the devils out with the finger of God (Lk. 11: 20), and,

⁸¹² Namely before the creation of the angels, whoa re "pure minds", beings who are unknown with the senses, but who can be known only with the mind or with the understanding. Saint Basil the Great, *About the Holy Ghost* 13: 49; G.P. 32: 156 D – 157 A. The ages are "intelligible creatures", for they cannot be perceived with the senses.

⁸¹³ From here we can see that these heads were written by Saint Gregory Palamas after his *Antirrhetics* which he wrote against Akindynos, namely staring around the year 1345.

⁸¹⁴ Sain Gregory the Theologian, *Word no. 4 at Pentecost* 3; G.P. 36: 432 C.

according to Matthew, into the Ghost of God (Mt. 12: 28). And Basil the Great says that the finger of God is one of the works of the Ghost. So, if one of them is the Holy Ghost, without any doubt, the others too are alike, as the same one taught us. But that doesn't mean that there are many gods, or many Ghosts. This is for, these ones are going-outs, are showings, and are natural works of One and the Sane Ghost. Through each of them, it is One Him Who works. Therefore, the strayed ones, by calling those ones as creatures, they lower the godlike Ghost, in a sevenfold manner, to the level of creature. Let them be ashamed for seven times. This is for, another prophet speaking about these ones, he says that they are eyes of the Lord, which look all over the earth (Zah. 4: 18). And he who writes in the Apocalypse, he says: "Grace and peace from God and from seven ghosts, which are before the throne of God and from Christ" (Apoc. 5: 4-5). He clearly presents here, to the believers, that those ones are the Holy Ghost.

92. God the Father, by heralding in advance, to Micah the Prophet, the birth according to the body of That One Who is the Only Begotten Son, and by wanting to show the lack-of-beginning of His godhead, he says that His going-outs are from the beginning of the days of the time (5: 1). These going-outs were interpreted by the godlike fathers as works and power of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, unlike those who strive themselves to cogitate and to argue the opinions of them who are strayed in their faith and who say about those that they are created. But let them finally take heed and tell us who is "The One from the beginning"? Who is Him Whom said says to: "From ever and forever You are" (Ps. 89: 2⁸¹⁵)? And let them wisely understand, if they want to, that God, by saying through the prophet that those going-outs have been since the beginning, He didn't say, by any means, that those have been created. Basil, the speaker-about-God, he didn't say either that those have been created, but he said that they were the works of God from before building the intelligible world, and from before ages⁸¹⁶. This is for, only God has been worker and

⁸¹⁵ In KJB we have: Ps. 90: 2: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."; in ROB we have: Ps. 89: 2: "Before the mountains were made and the earth and the world were was built, from ever and for ever You are." (E. l. t.'s n.)

⁸¹⁶ Saint Basil the Great, *About the Holy Ghost* 19; G.P. 32, *quoted column*.

almighty from ever, as One having power and works, from before eternity.

93. But the chiefs of the opposite opinion, by obviously opposing themselves to the saints, they say that there is only one uncreated reality: the godlike nature, and everything that differs from the godlike nature, in any way, it is a created reality. By saying that, they affirm that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are creatures too. This is for, one is too the work of the Three Ones. And That One Whose work is created, That One also cannot be uncreated. That's why, not the work of God, but what the work of God makes and its result is creature. That's why, the godlike Damascene taught us that that work that differs from the godlike nature it is the existential motion, namely natural. Once it is characteristic to the godlike work to made something, says the godlike Cyril, that work cannot be creature, except it was made by another work, and that one again by another work and so on endlessly; and the uncreated work will be searched for at the end.

94. The godlike being and work, by being present everywhere in an undivided manner, the work of God fits also within us who are created, for it is also divided in an unseparated manner, as the speakers-about God say, while the godlike nature remains, also according to them as totally undivided⁸¹⁷. That's why Saint John Chrysostom too, after he says about the droplet of the grace that it has filled up everything with knowledge, that through that droplet of the grace were done the wonders and were untied the sins, also the fact that this droplet is uncreated, and he hurries himself up to say that that droplet of the grace is work and it is not being. Later on, he also shows the difference between the godlike work and the godlike being and the Hypostasis of the Ghost, by writing: "I say that that is a part of the work, for the Comforter does not divide Himself. So, the godlike grace and the work they match within each of us, for it is divided undividedly. But the being of God, by being in itself totally undivided, how could it match within anything amongst the created realities?"⁸¹⁸.

⁸¹⁷ The godlike work is divided undividedly, as the voice of him who speaks is in them who listen to him, for he remains undivided while he is present in everyone who listen to him, through his voice, or through his power. He doesn't divide himself, but those ones, by being many, they receive him in their quality as many.

⁸¹⁸ Saint John Chrysostom, *Homily no. 14 at John*; G.P. 59: 91-92. The Comforter as Person, He is even in the smallest droplet of the grace. And it is about a small droplet, because only

95. There are three things into God: the being, the work, and the godlike Hypostases of the Trinity. They who are found worthy to be united with God, by becoming a Ghost with Him (as the Great Paul says: “He who attached himself to the Lord, he will be a Ghost with Him” (1 Cor. 6: 17)), as it was shown before, they are not united according to the being. This is because, all the speakers-about God confess that God cannot be shared according to His being. And the union according to Hypostasis is characteristic only to the Word God-the Man. The conclusion is, therefore, that they who are found worthy to be united with God, they are united according to the work. So, the Ghost Whom one who attached himself to God he will be one with God through, it is and it is called as the uncreated work of the Ghost, but not as Being of God, even if this is disliked by them who oppose us. This is for, also through the prophet God foretold not that “I will pour My Ghost”, but that “out of My Ghost” over the believers (Joel 3: 1)⁸¹⁹.

96. By the benevolence of God, he says, were moving Moses and David and all of them whom the godlike work was dwelling within, through the rejection of the bodily features, and they became living images of Christ and rather one with Him according to the grace than being only alike to Him. This is for, one is that one cleanness from Christ and from within saints, and the glory of the Lord shined over us (Ps. 89: 17⁸²⁰), says the all-godlike singer. This is for, the ghost-bearer souls, as the Great Basil says, by being those souls illuminated by the Ghost, they become themselves spiritual, and the spread the grace within others. From here come: the knowing of the future

that much can be received by him whom the grace comes within. Saint John Chrysostom, by speaking about the Ghost as Person and about His being, he says that the Ghost as Person fits within each human being through his droplet of grace, but His being remains non-comprised.

⁸¹⁹ If the Ghost had been united with us according to His Being, we would have had a common being with Him. If He had been united with us according to His Hypostasis, our person would have been one with His Person. Or, His Person would have become our person, as within Christ the Person of the Word had become the Person of the human nature. So, the Ghost unites Himself with us by work. But Himself as Person is not less united with our person through His work. We impropriate His work and He impropriates ours. We meet one another in the common but non-confounded divine-human (theandric) work.

⁸²⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 90: 17: “And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 89: 17: “And may the light of the Lord our God be over us and straighten the things of our hands.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

things, the understanding of the mysteries, the penetration into the hidden realities, the sharing of the gifts, the heavenly living, the singing with the angels, the ceaseless gladness, the dwelling of God within us, the likeness to God and, the highest amongst all the desired things: the transformation into god⁸²¹.

97. The angels surpass the people through this grace and shininess and through their union with God. That's why the understanding powers and the serving ghosts are second type lights, servants of the light from above and, as second type lights, they are reflections of the first light. The angel is the first luminous nature second to the first light, and the angels reflects that first light. The angel is the second light, an irradiation or an impartation with the first lights⁸²². And by moving in a circle, the deified minds are united with the without-beginning and without-end rays of the beautiful and of the good⁸²³. This is for, God Himself is light to the worthy ones, and He is not something else to them⁸²⁴. And what the sun is to the sensitive realities, like that is God to the intelligible realities⁸²⁵. He is the first and culminant light, which

⁸²¹ The Holy Ghost, by becoming a Subject within our subject, and His works by becoming our works, we will know the hidden and future mysteries and we will become gods by grace.

⁸²² "The first luminous nature after the first one". This means that God is the luminous nature by excellence. "God is light and there is no darkness in Him" (1 Jn. 1: 5). God can be fully known in His endless richness and He knows all the things He made and are made. The angels are the second luminous nature. The man is luminous nature too, but the man can become fully luminous only through the dwelling of God within him. The man is the conscience about himself and about all realities, but only partially. The angel reflects God in his light. The man, at his turn, he too reflects God. The angel is an "irradiation", a "flowing" out of God, and the man is likewise, to a smaller degree. And the man reached his accomplishment only into the light he receives from God, after, by creation, the man was imparted with his natural light from God. This isn't though, Neoplatonist, but it is an interpersonal relation. The angel is created as purely-mental subject, purely-understanding, and the man too, he is understanding, but the man has also a sensitive side in himself. But both the angel and the man are created as subjects, in order they to be imparted in relation with the godlike Subject with the whole His light and life. The irradiation is the way God enters the interpersonal relation with His creatures.

⁸²³ The "deified minds", or the angels, they are moving in a circle around the prime light in order they to be shared with That Light increasingly more. This is for, by moving themselves in a circle, the get closer to God from all directions, in all regards.

⁸²⁴ Out of God there irradiates only light, only the conscience about themselves, to those subjects who are destined to last forever and to ceaselessly advance into light, into the knowledge about themselves, about God, and about all the other subjects and objects.

⁸²⁵ But, while the sun belongs to the sensitive realities, God is beyond not only to the sensitive realities but even to the intelligible realities. God is transcendent to the intelligible realities as well. God cannot be known either through the work of the mind, or through the natural

illuminates the whole rational nature. But if, says Saint John Chrysostom, you hear the prophet saying: “I saw the Lord sitting on the throne” (Isa. 6: 1), do not reckon that he saw the being of the Lord, but he saw His descent, and he saw that in a more overshadowed manner than the powers from above see it.

98. The whole nature is as far and as strange as possible to the godlike being. This is because, if God is nature, the others won't be nature, as if each one among the others is nature, God won't be nature. Likewise, God won't be existence, if the others are existence: but if He is existent, the others aren't existent⁸²⁶. You cogitate alike also about wisdom, about kindness, about all the realities form around God, and about God, and you will theologize well and in accordance with the saints. But God is and He is said as the nature of all existing realities, for all of them are imparted with Him and they subsist through the impartation with Him; *but this doesn't mean that through the impartation with His nature, God forbid that, but through the impartation with his work*. In this sense God is also the existence of the existing realities, and He is the shape in shapes, as origin of the shapes⁸²⁷, and the wisdom of the wise

understanding, but He can be known only through His work, namely through His light, that becomes characteristic to angels and people.

⁸²⁶ God is so unlike everything else that, if those ones are called as nature, He must not be called as nature. God exceeds the nature, or only God is true nature. Likewise in the case of the existence. God cannot be called as existence, if those ones are reckoned as existence, or, vice versa, if God is reckoned as existent, those ones must not be reckoned as existent. God exceeds the existence, or, He alone is the true existence. How precarious is our existence and the existence of anything else, even in our experience! Sometimes it seems to us like a dream. We often ask if our existence really exist. But surely, God will be the ultimate basis of their existence, even if He is inaccessible to our experience.

⁸²⁷ “The shape in shapes, as origin of the shapes” (εἶδος ἐν εἰδεσις ὡς εἰδεάρχης). In God are given, in a virtual manner, all the shapes, in their ultimate beauty which all our shapes tend towards. They are given as principle or a in their virtual origin and as in the final target of all the shapes. In God are prefigured all the shapes. That's why in God is prefigured the whole beauty. All the shapes, all the beauties are unfoldings of the shapes and of the beauties comprised within Him in a virtual manner, following to be concentrated in Him, according to their effort, and helped by Him, in a supreme harmony. That beauty that concentrates within itself all the beauties, the “shape” that concentrates within itself all the shapes, it is the richest, and the deepest, and the most expressive, and it is more comprising than all the shapes and beauties unfolded out of it. In Him there is the beauty of maximum discretion and grace, beyond any exhibitionism and theatricality. (the Romanian “formosus” it comes from “forma” (shape)).

ones⁸²⁸ and, simply, all to everyone. In the same time, He is not nature because of being Him above all nature, and He doesn't exist, because of being Him above all existing realities; and He doesn't exist and He is shapeless, because of being Him above shape. Therefore, how will us reach close to God? BY getting close to His being? But none among the created realities has, and none of them will ever have any impartation with or any closeness to the supreme nature. So, if one has reached close to God, that one surely will have come close to God's work. But how? As one who is imparted with that work in a natural manner? But this work is natural to all creatures. Consequently, through the natural powers, one reaches close to or far from God. And only the rational beings have a free will. Therefore, only the rational being from among all the other beings, they reach close to or far from God, by getting close or far through their virtue or evilness. So, only these ones are and are able to happiness or unhappiness⁸²⁹. But let's believe that we will achieve the happiness.

99. By comparing a creature to another, we say that one is near to God by nature, while another is stranger. Near to God are born the intelligible beings, which are known only with the mind. And totally strangers are those who fall under the senses. And among the last ones, even are farer those which are totally inanimate and motionless. So, by being compared to one another, the creatures are reckoned either close to God by nature or stranger⁸³⁰. But they, through them, according to the nature, all of them are stranger to God. Even more than that, one cannot even tell how far from God is the intelligible nature and how far are the works of the senses and the realities from under the senses, from the intelligible realities⁸³¹. So, because

⁸²⁸ If God's wisdom is spring within the wise ones, any deviation from the harmonious wisdom it means our falling off God as center, as means, even if that means slipping from Him even with a part of our being.

⁸²⁹ Through our free will, we get close to and we get far from God, for He is too having a free will and being a Person. The persons achieve the closeness with one another through a free bilateral openness. We are having here another dimension of the existence. And on that it depends the happiness or the unhappiness of the created persons, limited in themselves, but aspiring to infinity.

⁸³⁰ There are diverse dimensions of the existence. The highest one is that of the godlike nature. Those existences which receive the light of the godlike nature, they increase in conscience so that reach near to the godlike existence.

⁸³¹ Only when compared to one another, some natures are reckoned as closer to God, while others are farer. Looked in themselves, all of them are far from God. Even more than that, one

of being, by nature, so far from God, woe to us, if we do not make ourselves as close to Him by our good deeds and by our good behaviors, which spring out of a good decision⁸³².

100. The common and deified voice of the godlike speeches about God, namely the bearer-of-God Damascene, he says in the second one of his theological heads: “He who wants to speak or to hear something about God, he must limpidly know that neither all the aspects are unspeakable, nor all of them are to be spoken, either belonging to theology or to oikonomia; neither all of them are to be known, nor all of them are to be unknown. We know that they are above-word also those which we want to speak about from among the godlike realities, given the fact that they belong to a Word Who exceeds all realities. This is for, they aren’t outside the word by some diminution of them, but they are outside our word which we have within us and which we utter to others’ hearing. This is because, neither the uttered word could explain those realities, nor the inside word could reach them, no matter how hard it tries. So, we must not allow ourselves to speak about God from ourselves, but let’s turn ourselves towards them who speak into Ghost about those of the Ghost; and we will speak if our opposants ask us for a word”⁸³³.

101. They say that on the doors of Plato’s school was written that no one must enter there if that one didn’t know

cannot tell how far the intelligible natures are from God and how far are the works of the senses and the sensitive realities from the intelligible realities. There is an infinite distance between the existence of the intelligible realities - but created realities - and God, and there might be also an infinite distance between the existence of the sensitive realities and their feeling and the intelligible realities. The distance between them remains an impenetrable mystery to us. One cannot say anything about it. What could we say, for instance, about the distance between us and the animals? But, from another point of view, the intelligible realities are near to the sensitive realities by conscience, and the sensitive realities, without they realizing it, are near to the understanding realities, through the necessity they represent to those ones, in order those to enrich themselves in knowledge. Likewise, God is near to all the realities created by His as Creator and Upholder of theirs, and the created realities – especially the conscious ones – are near to God, by the need their feel or they have for Him.

⁸³² Our good deeds produce our closest to God dimension; by our will our good deeds place us in accord with His will.

⁸³³ “Belong to the word in sense of surpassing (χαθ υπερέχοντα λόγον)”. The unspoken do not belongs to a sphere where the word is missing, for those realities aren’t bellow word. But they belong to a sphere which is matches by a word that is above our words. Those ones aren’t irrational, but they belong to a rationality that includes our rationality and it exceeds it too. In a way, we can combine the words in such a manner, when we want to express those realities, so that to accomplish an expression that is above-expression.

geometry. But he doesn't know geometry at all, he who is unable to cogitate and speak about the undivided and about the divided realities. This is because, there cannot be an edge without something being limited; it is impossible. And the geometry speaks almost only about edges, which are determined and which are shown without the realities bordered by them, sometimes even as standing by themselves. The mind divides the undivided realities. And who he hasn't learnt yet to divide with his mind, the body from the surrounding realities, how could he want to hear about a nature as such, a nature that not only is separated from its natural aspects, while being into them, but it neither can be without those? How it could that want to hear about wholes as wholes, which are in parts, because only by mind and by word those ones are separated, and they are cogitated before the many, because of not being able to exist, to the true rationality, without the many? How it could want to hear about the intelligible and understandable realities?⁸³⁴ How it could want to hear them who say that each of us has mind and understanding and that each of our cogitations is mind? Won't that laugh at us and won't that shout out blaming us because of saying that each man has two and several minds? And he who is unable to stand such affirmation that there are realities which are unseparated but still different, how could him speak or hear something like that about God? This is for, at God, there are and they are said many unions and differences, according to the speakers-about-God. By hearing us speaking in agreement with the saints, about a union in a difference, and that something belonging to God is non-comprisable, but something else can match in, but God is One, the Same One being non-comprised according to His being, but matched in by creatures according to His godlike works, namely according to His will from before ages, regarding us, according to His Providence from before ages, for us, according to His wisdom before ages, regarding us, and, so we say like the godlike Maximos said, according to His limitless wisdom and kindness; when hearing these from us, our opposants, as we are forced to tell these, they and the people like them, they blame us that we speak about several gods and about several uncreated things, and so we make God as

⁸³⁴ Those who understand cannot be separated with the mind from those which are understood by them, or which are cogitated by them. All of them are distinct and unseparated.

composed. They do not know that God divides Himself undividedly, and that God is united in difference; and this doesn't bring into God either multiplication or composition.

102. The great Paul, the mouth of Christ, the vessel of the choice (Acts 9: 15), the all-enlightened bearer of the godlike name, he says that "the unseen realities of God from the foundation of the worlds, by being understood out of creatures, are seen His eternal power and godhood" (Rom. 1: 20). It is the being of God that is seen, by being understood out of creatures? Not at all. Only the insanity of the strayed ones – and before them the madness of Eunomius – write that out of creatures one doesn't understand anything else but the being of God. But the godlike apostle is far from affirming such things. This is for, by teaching before that what is known about God it is shown (Rom. 1: 19) and by showing that there is something else that is above what we know about God Whom he unveiled to all of them who have mind, he later added: "For the unsee realties of God from the foundation of the world, they are seen by being understood out of creatures". And what we can know about God, you can find out from the bearer-of-God fathers, who present the things like this: something belonging to God is unknown; that is His being; and something else is know; these ones are all the realities from around His being, or His kindness, and His wisdom, and His power, and His godhood, and His glory. These ones are called by Paul also as unseen, but being understood out of creatures. And if these which can be understood out of creatures, are around the being of God, how could they be creatures too?⁸³⁵ Consequently, the work of God understood out of creatures it is, on one hand uncreated, and on the other hand it is not being, because of not being presented only at singular, but at plural too.

103. The creatures show the wisdom, the skillfulness, and the power, but they do not show the being, says Basil the Great, speaking against Eunomius who was saying that out of creatures it is shown the being of God⁸³⁶. Consequently, the work of God that can be understood out of creatures, it is, on one side uncreated, and on the other side it isn't a being. And

⁸³⁵ This chapter is taken by Palamas from his work *About the Godlike Union and Difference* (Ed. Hristou, vol. II, pp. 74-75).

⁸³⁶ Saint Basil the Great, *Against Eunomius*, 2; G.P. 29: 748 B.

they who say that the godlike work doesn't differ at all from the godlike being, they obviously are Eunomians.

104. Rightly it is said, therefore, in the *Antirrhetics* written by that brother⁸³⁷, who cogitates at the brotherly things, that by understanding the beauty and the greatness of the wonders from the creation, and by achieving other and other meanings regarding God, and by interpreting each of these meanings that are born within us, we can use diverse names⁸³⁸. This is for, out of the greatness and the beauty of the creatures, it is contemplated, by resemblance, the Creator, and, from them we call as Maker their Builder (this is for, it is possible to Him who has the power, to materialize His will) and righteous judge and impartial. But, also the word "God" we have learnt to respect it from His seer work. So, neither through this word, by teaching about a certain partial work of the godlike nature, we do not cogitate at the godlike being⁸³⁹.

105. Dionysus the Areopagite, the highest among the speakers-about-God, second only to the godlike apostles, after he clarified the difference regarding the Hypostases of God, he said: "The benefactor going-out is a godlike distinction, the godlike unity multiplying on itself in an above-unity manner, through kindness"⁸⁴⁰. And a little further: "The benefactor going-outs of the godlike spring, we say about them that they are godlike distinction. This is for, by giving to all existing realities, as a gift, and by overpouring the impartations of all goods, it distinguishes itself as being united and it multiplies itself unitarily without exiting The One"⁸⁴¹. And a little further: "These common and united distinctions of the entire godhead, or the benefactor going-outs, we are going to try to extoll them as much as possible". He limpidly shows that there is at God another difference too, and not only that regarding the Hypostases. This difference other than hypostatical, he calls it as the difference of the godhead. This is for, the difference regarding the hypostases it isn't the difference of the godhead. He says that God is multiplying Himself also through the

⁸³⁷ Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* 2; G.P. 29: 748 AB.

⁸³⁸ We have added here this phrase, instead of the original *with diverse name*, for it seemed to us as not making sense. (E. I. t.'s n.)

⁸³⁹ Θεός comes from θεάομαι – I look. The name God is, therefore, also the name of a work of God. We have no name for the godlike being.

⁸⁴⁰ Dionysus the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Names* 2; G.P. 3: 641 D – 644 D.

⁸⁴¹ *Ibid.*

godlike going-outs and works. And now he is calling that as going-outs, while, on another occasion, he says: "The godhead doesn't multiply itself, God forbid that" and "God doesn't multiply Himself, for God is in Trinity, but He is not tripled". He also shows the uncreated character of these going-outs and works. This is for, he called them as godlike, and he said that they are differences of the entire godhead. He also said that itself the godlike spring is being multiplied by these going-outs and works, by not receiving anything from outside. And he even promised to extoll these features, adding: "as much as possible". By this, the highest among the extollers of God presented those, to us, as above all-glorification.

106. The same speaker-about-God, saying that the benefactor going-out is a godlike distinction, he adds: "This is for, the last impartations are united in the godlike distinction". He has called here as impartation, all together the going-outs and the works of God. But he added that those cannot be framed within world, in order somebody not to reckon that those ones are the results of the work, as, for instance, the being of each existence, or the sensitive life within the living ones, or the rationality and the mind into the rational and understanding ones. This is because, how could be these ones into God and not-framed into creation, once they are created? Or, how could be creatures the going-outs and the impartations of this kind, of God, which are non-framed into world, once the non-framed impartation is, in a natural manner, in Him Who imparts, as the light shows that to us?⁸⁴²

107. A little further, this great (Dionysus) extolls the going-outs and the works of this kind, of God, with other names appropriate to God, by calling them as impartations and Self-impartations. And he even shows them, in several parts of his writings, as being above-the-existing realities (above-creatures) and as being prime models (paradigms) of the existing realities, as existing from before into God, in an above-being unity. So, how could these be creatures? In the following he adds to teach us also what these paradigms are: "We say that are paradigms the existence-making rationalities of the things, which preexisted into God unitarily, and which are called by theology

⁸⁴² This chapter is taken by Palamas from his work *About Union and Difference* 11 (At P. Hristou, quoted edition, vol. II, p. 77). It is a work Palamas wrote against Barlaam and Akindynos. Dionysus the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Names*; G.P. 3: 641 D – 644 A.

as predefinitions and godlike and good wills, definitory and makers of the things. According to them, He predefined and brought to existence all the things”⁸⁴³. How could therefore be created, the godlike predefinitions and wills which are maker-of-the-things? How could that not be obvious as lowering the being of God on the level of creature, because of being these going-outs and works reckoned as created? This is for the godlike will, and these godlike impartations and gifts of the kindness that is the cause of all realities, they are not but the of-being-maker work, of-wisdom-maker work, and simply the maker and upholder work of all created realities.

108. The impartation of the self-existence is no longer imparted, at its turn, by anything, as the great Dionysus says too. And the other impartations, for they are impartation which the creatures are being produce through, and which the creatures take their beginning from, those impartations aren’t either imparted with anything; this is because neither the Providence is imparted with Providence, neither the life is imparted with life. But because they have the existence, we can say that they are imparted with the existence itself, given the fact that without existence they could not exist, neither they could be imparted, as it is the case too, of the prescience without science. That’s why, as self-impartation, they are not at all created. And also due to that, according to Saint Maximos the Confessor, they have never started to exist; and they are contemplated as existentially being around God; and there was no moment they didn’t existed on⁸⁴⁴. But the opposants, by

⁸⁴³ The “predefinitions” (προορισμοί) of the existences into God it is a term belonging to Dionysus the Areopagite. That term doesn’t mean the predestination of the modes which the existences will behave into, but only the pre-contours, or the pre-limitations by which they distinguish from one another, or the virtual forms of their existence into God. Even their evolution is prefigured into God, but it is not predetermined. This is because, the rational beings can move themselves freely in the frame of their rationalities of predefinitions. This is for, the changes in good or in bad produced or caused by themselves, those do not change their rationalities themselves, but they change only their modes, as Says Saint Maximos the Confessor. The devil remains, according to its rationality, an angel, and it only has become, according to its mode, freely, a demon. These “pre-definitions”, as also the “pre-forms” from the head no. 78, they do not have the meaning of some ready-made definitions, which are existing from before into God, but they are the meaning of some definitions or contours of the creatures, given in a virtual manner, in the creator thinking and power of God. One can say that in each work which God works through, in somebody or in something, there is a dynamic form helping that humanin being to define herself/himself. The quote is from Dionysus the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Names* 5: 8; G.P. 3: 824 C.

⁸⁴⁴ *Gnostic Heads* 1: 48; G.P. XC 1100 D.

reckoning, without piousness, the life itself, the kindness itself, and the realities alike, because of being imparted with the common name of the existing realities, the opposers cannot see that, though they are called as existences, they are above-existences, as the Great Dionysus says. The opposants, by placing the self-impartations on the same level with the creatures, they could easily reckon the Holy Ghost as created too, once the Great Basil says that the Holy Ghost too is imparted with the worthy of God names.

109. And if somebody said that only the self-existence is impartation, because of being the only one not receiving anything through impartation but it lets itself to be imparted, for the other realities receive, through impartation, from it, let that someone know that he wouldn't cogitate wisely at all, about the other impartations. This is because, the living creatures, of the holy ones, or the good ones, we do not say that they live and they are sanctified and improved for the fact that they are and that they are imparted with the self-existence, but for the fact that they are imparted with the self-life, with the self-holiness, and with the self-kindness. And the self-kindness, and the others alike, it doesn't become self-life by being imparted with another self-life. That's why, at its turn, for it is self-life, it is from among those which are given through impartation, and not from among those which received through impartation. And what is not receives through impartation but it is given through impartation, but it makes alive the living ones, how could that be a creature? And the situation is the same regarding the other impartations.

110. Arguments for our words are provided also by Saint Maximos the Confessor, who reckons these going-outs of God as the Providence that produces all realities. He writes in his scholia: "The creator providences and goods, namely those of being, of life, and of maker wisdom, they are common to the Oneness in Three Hypostasis"⁸⁴⁵. So, by saying that they are many and diverse, he showed that they aren't beings of God, for the being of God is One and totally unimparted. And by saying that they are common to the Oneness differentiated in Three Hypostasis, he showed us that those aren't either the Son or the Holy Ghost. This is because, none of These Ones is the work common to the Tree Ones. Finally, by saying about those that

⁸⁴⁵ *Scholia at About the Godlike Names* II: 5; G.P. 4: 221 AB.

they are providences and goods, but they are creator too, he showed them as uncreated; consequently, they would have existed through another creator power and that one would have been created too, by another power, and so on. He who did that, he would throw himself towards the ultimate insanity, without advancing towards infinite⁸⁴⁶. Therefore, the going-outs and the works of God are uncreated, but none of them is either being or hypostasis.

111. The creator and the organizer of the entire world, by giving the world a much-diverse countenance, through the unmatched overwhelming of His kindness, He wanted some of them only to exist, and other to also have life in addition to their existence; and from among these He wanted some of them to be imparted with the understanding life. And He wanted some of them to have their life combined of both these two. Those ones which have taken rational and understanding life from Him, He wanted them that, through their willing tendency towards Him, they to reach the union with Him, and thus to live in a godlike and above-nature manner, in order they to be found worthy of the deifying grace and work. This is for, His will is creator for them who are (creatures), either they have been brought out of inexistence, or they are also improved. And this is, in a diverse manner. This is for, this diversity of the godlike will regarding the things, the one providence and kindness, namely the God's turning, by His kindness, towards the lower realities, it is reckoned by the wise-speakers-about-God as being several providences and types of kindness, which are divided and become diverse, in an undivided manner, in the divided realities. Thus, one of them is called as the fore-knower power of God; another is called as the creator and upholder power of God. From among these ones, again, according to the Great Dionysius, some of them are of-being-creator powers, other of life, and other of-wisdom-makers. But each of those is common to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. And through each of them, that good and godlike will of God, regarding us, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, it is work and power of being and of-wisdom-maker⁸⁴⁷. He also called these as unframed and undiminished

⁸⁴⁶ This head is taken from the mentioned work written by Palamas (Ed. Hristou, quoted tome, pp. 78-79).

⁸⁴⁷ So, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost They are as Persons in each work of Theirs.

impartations, thus elevating them above all realities and, in the same time, teaching us that they dwell, in a natural manner, in Him Who gives those, as a gift.

112. Like the sun by giving without diminishing itself⁸⁴⁸, warmth and light, to them who are imparted with it, the sun has these wonderful natural and existential works in itself, likewise, the godlike gifts, by being, without diminution, into Him Who spreads them out, they are natural and existential works of His, consequently they are uncreated too. There doesn't remain any trace of sunlight while the sun is under the earth and when the sun leaves the things from on earth, and it is impossible to somebody to enjoy the sunray without joining himself with that ray and without uniting himself, through that ray, with the sun itself, which the light starts from. And the warmth coming from the sun and all the other things coming from the sun and which help to the birth and to the growth of the sensitive realities and to the diverse multiplication of their juices and features, they will be missed by these ones if they do not have, through ray, the union with the sun. Likewise, as this obscure icon of the sensitive realities shows us, only those who encounter that above-nature-and-all-godlike-light, only them are imparted with the deifier grace and through the grace they are united with God. All the others are the results (the effects) of the creator work. These ones are brought to existence out of the inexistence, namely as a gift, but they aren't illuminated by grace, which is another name of the shininess of God⁸⁴⁹.

113. This godlike shininess and work of God, which those imparted with it are deified through, it is a certain godlike grace, but it is not the nature of God. Not because that is absent in them who are given as a gift, with grace, according to the insane gossip of the opposants, for the nature of God is present everywhere. But as one that isn't impartable, not existing anything that could be imparted with it, as it has been demonstrated before. Besides, also the godlike work and the grace of the Ghost being present everywhere, and not being separated from That One, them who due to their uncleanness

⁸⁴⁸ So, Palamas rejects, anticipatedly, the accusation brought him nowadays (quoted from Istina Review) of Neoplatonism, by stressing out that God doesn't diminish Himself by irradiating out of Himself, the work of the grace, or the godlike light.

⁸⁴⁹ They who are united with the grace as work irradiating out of God, they are united with God Himself as Person. But some of them are like those who no longer see the sun and who no longer receive the warmth from the sun, and so they remain simply created and preserved.

are incapable to be imparted with, those are unimpartable to them, like they would be absent. This is because somebody says that “like the imprinting of the images aren’t done on all substances, but only on those having a certain tenderness and transparency, likewise, the work of the Ghost doesn’t show itself in all the souls, but only within those souls who have nothing cunning (winding) and twisted within themselves”. And again: “The Holy Ghost is present to everyone. But them who have cleaned themselves of passions, it is shown His power, while them who have their mastery part disturbed by the stains of the sin, He is not shown them yet”.

114. The sunlight is unseparated from the ray and the warmth given by it, as a gift. But the light isn’t imparted to them who have not eyes, despite they are touched by that ray, those ones receive only that warmth from the ray. This is because, it is impossible to them who lack their eyes, to reach the knowledge of the light. Likewise, and even much stronger so, no one amongst them who enjoy the godlike shininess can be imparted with the being of our Creator. This is because there is no creature able to receive the being of our Creator.

115. Together-witness that the work give as impartation isn’t either created or the being of God, it is to us John, the Baptizer of our Lord, together with Jon, the most beloved disciple of our Lord, as also John Chrysostom. One of them by telling us the story and writing; the forerunner and Baptizer of Christ saying that to Christ the Ghost wasn’t given with measure (Jn. 3: 34); and the Golden Speaker explaining and writing that the Ghost means here the work: “This is for, all of us take the work of the Ghost with measure, but That One had the whole work unmeasured and whole. And if the work of That One is unmeasured, all the more will be His being”. So, by calling the work as Ghost, better said Himself the Ghost of God, as the Baptizer did, and by saying that this work is unmeasured, he showed it as uncreated. And by saying that we receive it with measure, he showed the difference between the uncreated work and the uncreated being. This is because, no one ever received the godlike being. But you cannot either tell that all of them together, because that will mean that each of them receives it in a divided manner, according to his cleanness. This is because, by going further on, father John Chrysostom whose also another difference between the uncreated being and the uncreated work, by saying that: “And if

the work of the Ghost is unmeasured, all the more will be so His being”⁸⁵⁰.

116. If, according to the insanities of our opposants and of them who think alike to them, the work, and the doing that belong to the work, they do not differ at all from the godlike being, they won’t differ, at all, either the giving-of-birth from the proceeding, which belong to the being. And if making doesn’t differ from giving birth or from proceeding, neither the creatures will differ, at all, from the Born One and from the Proceeded One. And if it had been so, according to our opposants, The Son of God and the Holy Ghost wouldn’t have been different, in anything, from creatures. And all the creatures born and proceeded by God-and-the Father, and every creature, they will be dame gods; and so, God would have been placed on the creatures’ level. That’s why the godlike Cyril, by showing the difference between the being and the work of God, he says: “giving birth is proper to the godlike nature; and doing is proper to the godlike work”. And later on, he adds, saying clearly: “The nature and the work aren’t one and the same thing”⁸⁵¹.

117. If the godlike being hadn’t been different, at all, from the godlike work, neither would have been different, at all, the doing from the proceeding. But God-and-the Father creates through the Son into the Holy Ghost. Consequently, he gives birth and he proceeds, according to the opinion of our opposants and of them who are alike, through the Son into the Ghost.

118. If the godlike being hadn’t differed, at all, from the godlike work, it wouldn’t have differed either from will. Consequently, the Only Begotten One out of the being of the Father, He would have been created by the will of God.

119. If the being of God hadn’t been different, at all, from the godlike work, and the bearers-of-God confess that God has many works, as God has also many providences and creator goods, as it has been demonstrated above, then God would have had several beings too, and that hasn’t been ever thought or said by them who belong to the Christian nation.

120. If the work of God hadn’t differed, at all, from the godlike being, then they wouldn’t have differed either from one another. Consequently, the will of God wouldn’t have been

⁸⁵⁰ Saint John Chrysostom, *Homily no. 30*: 2; G.P. LIX: 174.

⁸⁵¹ *Thesauruses*; G.P. LXXV: 3120.

different, at all, from His prescience. And then, either God wouldn't have known everything in advance, once He doesn't want all the realities which are being made, or he also would have wanted the evil ones, for He knows everything in advance. Consequently, the godlike prescience is different from the godlike will, and, therefore, each of those differs from the godlike being.

121. But if the godlike works hadn't been different from one another, then neither the creator work would have been different from the fore-knower work. So, for God started once to created, He also started to fore-know. And how still be God as non-fore-knowing everything from before ages?

122. If the creator work of God hadn't differed at all from the godlike prescience, then the creatures would have been in the same time with the prescience of God. They are without-beginning creatures, for God would have created them without beginning, once God also fore-knows without beginning and the fore-known realities are fore-known without beginning. But then, how could have been Him God, if His creature hadn't been brought to existence later than Him.

123. If the creator work hadn't been different at all, from the prescience of God, this work wouldn't have been submitted to God's will; neither would God have created by what He wanted, but He would have created by the fact that He had existed. But how could have been God Him who had created unwillingly?

124. God is Himself into Himself, for the Three godlike Hypostases are one into another, consubstantially and eternally, comprising one another in an unmixed manner. But God is also into the entire world and the entire world is into God, God as the One Who upholds the world, and the world as the one upheld by God. And all the realities are imparted with the work of upholding, but they aren't imparted with the being of God. That's why, the speakers-about-God say that the fact that God is present everywhere, it is a work of God.

125. They who were pleasant to God and who reached the target which they were made for, namely the deification (this is for, the father say that God made us for becoming partakers to His godhead, 2 Pt. 1: 4), they are into God, as The One Who deifies them. Therefore, they too are imparted with the godlike work, and the speakers-about-God say that the deification is a name of the godlike work.

126. That above-being and above-life nature, above God (as work) and above-good, if it had been above-good and above God⁸⁵², and so on, it is unspeakable and unthinkable, and totally impossible to contemplate, for the fact that it is above all realities and it is supra-unknown⁸⁵³ and it is placed above those above-heavens minds, through a non-comprisable power, being always totally non-comprised and unspeakable⁸⁵⁴. This is because, there is no name called in this age and in the future age that could belong to it; there is not word into the soul or uttered in speaking, that to be appropriate to it; there is no touch or sensitive or intelligible impartation with it, neither is there any imagination able to ascend to it. That's why, the speakers-about-God reckon as closest to it, the most total nescience, by negations, which negate, through exceeding, all the existing or spoken realities⁸⁵⁵. Consequently, it is not allowed him who knows that truth that is above any truth, to call it either being, or nature, in a proper meaning. On the other hand, though, because that is the cause of all realities and all realities are around that and all realities are for that and that has all realities, un a borderless manner, within itself, from before, that must be called out of all realities, and not in a proper meaning, but in an improper meaning. So, that can be called as being and as nature. But in a proper meaning, it is called like that of-life-maker going-out and work of God. This is, according to the Great Dionysus, the theological meaning of the name *being*, as given to Him Who truly exists.

127. Somebody could find out the name as nature given also to the natural features, either regarding the created existences, or regarding God. Thus, he who was all-theologian among the two Gregorys, says somewhere in his poems: "This nature of my Master brings me happiness. This is because the giving is not necessarily one with the nature, but it is a feature of the Benefactor". One could say also about fire, that the fire

⁸⁵² Above God in sense of exceeding. For that is God, but it is above what we think and what we experience as being God. Likewise, it is above what we think and experience as good.

⁸⁵³ It is above our knowledge by negation, namely it is about what we think that we think, by renouncing to knowledge.

⁸⁵⁴ From the quoted work of Palamas (Hristou, p. 93). Dionysus the Areopagite, *About the Godlike Names* II: 27; G.P. III: 645 B.

⁸⁵⁵ All the existing or spoken realities, they must be negated through exceeding, when we think at God. Namely, they must be denied, by reckoning God not below them, but above them.

has the natural tendency to go upwards and to enter the viewer. But – as it seems to me – that isn't the nature of the fire, as neither is that the crossing through. The fire's nature is the spring of the motion. Consequently, the natural realities are called as nature too. Also, the Great Dionysus says so, in another place, by writing that the nature of the good is to bring to existence and to save, meaning by that, that this is a naturel feature of the good. Consequently, when you hear the fathers calling the being of God an unimpartable, you will understand that being that doesn't go out of itself and it doesn't unveil itself. But when you hear again that the fathers call the being of God and impartable, you will understand that that is about the going-out and the showing and the work that belong to God in a natural manner. And so, by honoring both affirmations, you will confess in accordance with the fathers.

128. Even the smallest part of the being, it has all the being's powers, like the spark too is bright and luminous and it differentiate and it burns them who come close to it, and it moves itself by nature, it ascends upwards, and it has, simply saying, all the features had by fire whose particle that spark is. Also, the droplet has all the features had by the water whose droplet is. Likewise, the shard of metal has all the features had by the metal which that shard has been taken out of. Consequently, if we had been imparted with the non-unveiled being of God, we either would have been imparted with the whole Hid being, or we would have been imparted with a little bit of God's being, we would have been almighty; and each among existences would have been almighty. But this is not had either by all of us together, nor it that had by the entire creation. This being abundantly shown by Paul, he confesses that even they who are partakers to the deifying gifts of the Ghost, they won't receive all the Ghost's gifts together. "But to one is given, he says, word of wisdom, to another word of knowledge, to another, again, something else, into the same Ghost" (1 Cor. 12: 8). And the father with a Golden Mouth, by rejecting in advance the straying of the opposants from now, he says: "Somebody has not everything, so that you won't reckon that the grace is nature". But let nobody reckon, if he has mind, the grace like created, despite the grace being different from the godlike nature. But again, let nobody fear that, by not understanding through grace the nature of God, he would reckon the grace as creature. The grace of the Ghost isn't

separated from the godlike nature, but the grace rather attracts them who are found worthy, to the union with the godlike Ghost⁸⁵⁶.

129. The being has as many hypostases as the being is imparted with. This is for, as many candlesticks somebody light up from one candlestick, so many hypostases of the fire he will compose. So, if, according to our opposants, the being of God had let itself to be imparted, and even by everyone, it would mean that the being of God wouldn't have any longer been in Three Hypostases but in countless hypostases. But who doesn't know, amongst them who are nourished with the godlike dogmas, that this is the Messalians nonsense? This is because, according to Messalians, they who have reached the peak of the virtue, they are imparted with the being of God. Our opposants, by aspiring to surpass the blasphemy of the Messalians, they even argue that not only them who shine through virtues among people, but everyone is imparted with the godlike being. They argue that on the ground that the godlike nature is present everywhere. But Gregory the Great in theology, by toppling over the insane opinion of both those ones and these ones, he says: "Christ is called as such due to His godhead. This is for the godhead is the anointing of the humanity, and the godhead doesn't sanctify the humanity into Christ only through work, as into other anointed, but through the godhead entire presence of The One Who anoints". And the of-God-wise fathers, matching in thoughts to one another, they declared that Christ's godhead dwell within them who have been cleaned appropriately, but not according to the godhead's nature. Consequently, no one becomes partaker to God according to the being or according to some hypostasis. This is because, none of these is given towards impartation in any way, neither is any of them imparted, regardless how little, to anyone. That's why, through these, God isn't comprised into anybody and into anything, though He is, through them, present everywhere. But the common work and power of that nature in Three Hypostases, they are imparted in diverse manner and appropriately to them who are imparted with it. That's why it matches in, into them who are gifted with grace. This is for, the Holy Ghost – us to say alike to what Great Basil said – He

⁸⁵⁶ Far from separating them from the godlike Ghost as Person, the grace even unites them, with the Ghost, for into grace there is the Ghost Himself, as in His manifestation.

doesn't impart Himself to the worthy one, in one measure, but He divides His work on the measure of eth faith. This is for, the Holy Ghost is simple in being but He is diverse in powers⁸⁵⁷.

130. Being somebody imparted with something, it means being partaker to that which he is imparted with. And if he is not imparted with a part but with the whole, one can say, properly, that that one *has* that which he is imparted with; and not that that one is imparted with that. Therefore, the one who gives himself towards impartation, he will *impart himself*, if he who receives the impartation is imparted only with a part of the one who imparts himself. But the being of God is totally undividable, and therefore it is unimpartable. This is for the impartation is characteristic to the godlike work, it was said in many places, in his writings, by our father with a Golden Mouth. Consequently, the work is that which is given, towards impartation, to them who have been found worthy of the deifier grace. Listen, in this sense, again to the one who had a Golden Mouth, who teaches, as limpidly as possible, both aspects: that, on one hand, the work is that which is imparted undividedly, but not the unimpartable being, which the godlike works spring out of. This is for, by adding the evangelical word that "*out of His fullness we all have taken*" (Jn. 1: 16), he says: "if in the case of fire, where the one who is imparted, it is being and body, we both divide and do not divide the fire, all the more in the case of the work and even a work that comes out of the incorporeal being⁸⁵⁸.

131. Being imparted with something according to the being, it necessarily means having in common the being of the one who gives himself to be imparted, and, in some regard, it means having the same being. But who has ever heard that our being and God's being are one, in a certain regard? This is especially for, Basile the Great says: "The works of God descend to us, but His being remains unapproachable"⁸⁵⁹. Therefore, it is impossible even to them who have been deified and even through the godlike grace, to be them imparted with the godlike being. But it is possible they to be imparted with the godlike work. And Gregory the speaker-about God, he says: "Tho this I am being led here, by the without-evening light of the truth, to

⁸⁵⁷ *About the Holy Ghost* IX: 22; G.P. XXXII: 168 C.

⁸⁵⁸ *Homily no. 14 at John I*; G.P. LIX: 91-92.

⁸⁵⁹ *Epistle no. 234, 1*; G.P. XXXII, 969 AB.

see and to experience the shininess of God. And the shininess of our God is over us”, according to the psalmist Prophet (Ps. 89: 17⁸⁶⁰)⁸⁶¹. “And one if the work of God and of the saints” as limpidly writes Maximos, who is counted among the saints⁸⁶². And he even says that they are living images of Christ and they are rather one with Christ, by grace, than being only likenesses of His.

132. God is Himself into Himself, the Three godlike Hypostases having on Themselves and surrounding on Themselves and to One Another, in a natural manner, entirely, eternally, without going-out, but also in an unmixed and well-organized manner, so that They have also a sole work, and that cannot be found at any creature. This is because, at the creatures belonging to the same species, their work is of the same sort, but because each hypostasis works by himself, he also has his own work. But at the Three godlike and all-worshipped Hypostases it is not likewise. Truly, at Them, there is only one and the same work. This is for, one is the movement of the godlike will, starting from the beginner cause, that is the Father, and advancing through the Son, and being shown into the Holy Ghost. This can be seen in the results of that work. This is for, from here one can know the whole natural work of God. This is because, we do not see each Hypostasis, namely the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, to have each one an own result of His work, like each swallow make its own nest, of the same kind, or like each page is written by another writer, though using the same letters. And the whole creation is a sole thing of the Three Ones⁸⁶³. And we have been taught by the

⁸⁶⁰ In KJB we have: Ps. 90: 17: “And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.”; in ROB we have: Ps. 89: 19: “And may the light of our Lord God be upon us and straighten the things of our hands.” (E. l. t.’s n.)

⁸⁶¹ Saint Gregory the New Theologian, *Word no. 38*, II; G.P. XXXVI: 324 A.

⁸⁶² *Opusc. Theol. Et polem.*; G.P. XIC: 33 C.

⁸⁶³ The work spring out of being, but the being is hypostatized in The Three Persons. So, These Persons work through the work of the same being, through Their common work. In each work that comes within us, the Three Persons some within us too. They elevate us, They better us up, and They gladden us up through that joy that They have in common. That’s why Their work is always a work of the love, a work having in its this communion of the love. That’s why, they who have a spiritual sensitiveness, they feel in these works, the Three Person, both as distinct and united. It is thus also in the case of the works of the individuals, work which are directed towards others. Even when they work in common, they still won’t form a pluri-personal whole, but they will add their works together.

Holy Fathers, to understand from this creation, the fact that the work of the Three All-Worshipped Persons it is one and the same work, and not divided among the Three Persons.

133. The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are One into Another in a well-organized and unmixed manner, and from here we know that Their motion and work is one too. That's why, we know that the life or the power being had by the Father within Himself it isn't another from that of the Son Who is of the same life and power as That One too. Likewise, Both the Son and the Holy Ghost. And they who reckon that the godlike work isn't different, at all, from the godlike being, because our life is not Another but One and the Same God, and The Same is the life from before ages, and not for another, by within Himself, those ones are strayed in their faith and untaught. They are untaught, because of not having found out, yet, that the Supreme Trinity is not else but God Himself, but this isn't an impediment for the unity to differ from Trinity. And they are stray in their faith, because of abolishing one through another, both the work and the being. This is because, what it is for another, that won't be being. So, if those ones hadn't differed, at all, from another, then they would have been abolished one through another. Better said, I erase from the book of the worshippers of God, them who say that these ones do not differ at all.

134. But we confess that the Son of God is our life too, according to the cause and to the work, and we also say that He is the life through itself and in itself, not held by any connection and detached from all realities. And we say that He has both of these in an uncreated manner. Likewise, we say about the Father and about the Holy Ghost. So, let's say also that our life, which we are made alive through, and through a cause of the living realities, it is nothing else but the Father and the Son and the holy Ghost. This is for, our God in Three Hypostases, He is called as our life, according to the cause. And when the godlike life is thought not from the point of view of the cause, neither as being a life for another, but as outside some mandatory connection, and through itself, this one isn't but the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost⁸⁶⁴. So, these ones aren't an

⁸⁶⁴ The adversaries of Palamas didn't discern between the godlike work and the godlike being, on the ground that God Himself is our life. So, there isn't at Him a life for Himself and a life for us. Palamas answers that the fact that God is the life for Himself, it isn't an

impediment to them who believe, in their way of understanding that God is uncreated not only according to His being and according to His Hypostases, but also according to the godlike work of the Three Ones. This is for, we confess a sole God in Three Hypostases, having a sole being and a sole power and a sole work and all the others which are contemplated around the being. And Those Ones are called, according to the Scripture, also the totalness and the fulness of the godhead (Col. 2: 9), being them contemplated and cogitated alike, in Each One of the Three Holy Hypostases.

135. This is because, they who disregard this work, and here they say that it is created, and there they say that it doesn't differ at all from the godlike being, and then they contrive another straying by dogmatizing the Only Begotten Son as the only uncreated work of the Father. And by wanting to found this opinion, they bring as witness the words of the all-honored Cyril: "The life which the Father has in Himself it is not other than the Son, and the life from within the Son it isn't else but the Father. And this is proven true by Him Who says: "I am into the Father and the Father into Me" (Jn. 14: 11). But we are going to show, briefly, according to our power, the meaning of these words belonging to the saint and we are going to prove the straying of them who resist us out of a darkness which nothing can be distinguished within. The godlike Cyril opposes them who wrongly say that the Son isn't only alike the Father, but He is also according to the Father, because the Son has the life not according to the nature, but the Son gains the life through participation and as being added, as One Who has received His life from the Father, according to the written word: "As the Father has life into Himself, likewise he has given to the Son to have life in Himself" (Jn. 5: 16). Cyril opposes them who understand in a stray manner this place from the Gospel. This is for, God is called as life also according to His work, as One

impediment Him to be the life to us too, and therefore there to be at Him a difference between His being and work, like the unity of God isn't an impediment there to be in Him a difference between unity and Trinity. Confounding the life of God for us and the life of God for Himself, it will mean that we are indispensable to Him. That would have meant that He isn't from ever, because we aren't from ever as well, or we would have been from ever as well, for He is from ever. The conclusion here, it would be the pantheism. So, there is a difference between God as life for Himself and as life for us. This is for, God is life for us by His quality as our cause. But to Himself, God is not a cause, as he is a cause to us. But the same God is the life to Himself and the life to us too.

Who gives life to the living realities (for He is the life of them who live according to the nature, as Builder of the nature, but also of them who live in a godlike manner, as Giver of the grace), but it is also called as life regarded in itself not for another, but in a totally undetached and untired mode, so, the godlike Cyril wants to show that the Son doesn't differ from the Father by any of these two, and if the Son received something from the Father, that won't mean that the Son is after the Father, neither that the Son is second to the Father, intime, according to the being. That's why, in addition to many other things, he also says that: "Therefore, the fact that he received something from the Father, it doesn't force the Son to be the second in time, according to the being". Cyril doesn't mean here the being, when speaking about the life which the Father has and which the Son receives.

136. The godlike Cyril then shows that, though the son of God is called as life relatedly to the living creatures, according to the work He makes those creatures alive, so that He is called as their life, but He is not alike to the Father neither by that, but He has, according to the nature, the fact of being their life and of making them alive as the Father too. That's why he writes further on: "If the Son hadn't been life according to the being, how could have been told the truth He Who says: "He who believes in Me, he has eternal life."? (Jn. 6: 46-47); and again: "My sheep listen to My voice and I will give them eternal life" (Jn. 10: 27-28). And after a little while: "He promises to give life them who believe, for the life in within Him by nature and the life dwells within him existentially". How could one continue thinking, that the Son has received the life from the Father, because of not having the life Himself? Therefore, let them be shamed, they who are stray, when hearing that God has the life by nature, and that this is His being. This is because, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, God doesn't give His being, as a gift, to us the believers. It is far from us to cogitate such a straying!

137. In the followings, the great Cyril opposes, nevertheless, them who cogitate the contrary things, by saying: "By coming the Son from the Father, He attracts all the aspects belonging to the Father by nature. And of the feature of the being of the Father, it is the life too". But by calling it as one of the features of the being of the Father, he limpidly showed that the features of That One are many. So, if this life had been the

being of God, according to them who cogitate alike, God would have had many beings. But those suffer, in addition to their straying, also of a great nescience, because of saying that the existence and the feature are the same thing. And it is even a greater insanity the fact that they say that the existence and the features are one, and the many do not differ in anything. This is because, it is totally impossible and lacking of rationality, that something to be one and, in the same time, several.

138. So, the godlike Cyril, even only by saying that the life is one of the features of the Father, he showed that, by life, he didn't understand the being of God. But let's present, word by word, his sayings, which he said through, that there are many features of God. This is because, by continuing on this theme, he says that "many features are attributed to the Father, but the Son doesn't lack those either". How could these features of God, be also the godlike being? And wanting to mention some among these features of the Father, he brought Paul who says: "God is incorruptible, unseen, and the only One wise" (1 Tim. 1: 17). From here on can see even more, that none of the feature of God is His being. This is because, how could have been the incorruptibility, and the invisibility, and, simply, all the negative feature together, or each of them individually, to be God's being? None of these is God's being, for God's being isn't this or these. But the theologians, by placing on the same plan with these ones, also the affirmative features of God, they show that none of them shows the being of God, though, when necessary, we use all these names for indicating the God's being, once God's being is totally nameless.

139. Being about features, we necessarily ask ourselves: which one they belong to? If they belong to no one, then won't even be features. And if they had belonged to someone, but that one hadn't been the being, then the being wouldn't have differed from none of the features, but it would have belonged to each of them and to all the features. But the features by being many, that One being would have been many beings. And That One according to the being, would have been many, and so He would have had many beings. And if He had been one and he had had many beings, he would have necessarily been composed. So, the godlike Cyril, by elevating his listeners above these so stray opinions, he says in His *Thesauruses*: "If everything that God had been His being too, He would have been composed of many beings. This is because, there are many those which belong only

to Him according to the nature and to none among creatures. The godlike Scriptures say about God that He is Emperor, Lord, incorruptible and unseen, and in addition to these, still countless others. If each one among His features had had a rank of being, how couldn't have been composed Him Who is simple? But to cogitate this, it is everything that can be more insane".

140. Cyril, who was wise into the godlike knowledge, he shows, in details, that though the Son is life according to work, and he says that the Son has life as One Who makes us alive and that He is the life of the living ones, the Son won't be different from the Father either in this regard, for the Father too He gives life. But Saint Cyril, by wanting to show, in addition to that, that though the Son is and He is said as has life not because of another, but in a totally undetached and untied manner, neither in this regard the Son will differ from the Father. This is for, when we do not call God as life, as One Who makes us alive, but totally undetached and untied, then we will call His being, by starting from the work that belong to Him by nature. Saint Cyril did the same regarding the wisdom, and the kindness, and all the other features. So, by wanting to show this, Cyril says: "This is for, when we say that the Father has life in Himself (Jn. 14: 11), we call the Son as life, and He is other than the Father only by hypostasis, but not also by life. That's why one doesn't cogitate any composition of doubling related to Him. And when we say, again, that the Son has life into Himself, by meaning the untied life, we call by that the Father. This is for, by being life not for another, but in an untied manner, in Himself, the Father and the Son are One into Another. This is for, the Son Himself said: "I am into the Father and the Father into Me" (Jn. 14: 10). By these, the godlike Cyril showed that that life out of the Father, namely the Son, isn't anything else but the Father Himself, and the same in all aspects with Him, not differing at all from Him. But the opposers falsely bring the words of Saint Cyril in their support, because they actually dogmatize the mistakes of Sabellius, by arguing that this life is The Only Begotten Son born out of the Father.

141. But bringing the godlike Cyril as witness against himself, while he actually writes against opposants, how won't bring them the greatest damnation? This is because, telling something now, and then telling something else, and then

reckoning both things as true, it is characteristic to any rightly-worshipper theologian. But speaking things which are against himself, no one having a mind does that. Saint Cyril said first, rightly, that the Son has life according to the nature, and that life He gives to them who believe in Him, and Cyril showed by that not only the being of God, that is received by nobody, but also that work according to nature is called as His life, and that was received, according to grace, by them who were made alive by Him. And by that, they are saved also through Him, namely are made immortal according to the Ghost they who haven't been living before according to the Ghost. (This is for, they can be resurrected, they who reached being dead with a limb or with the whole body). If it is so, how will be able, thereafter, he who has presented these aspects so well and limpidly, to abolish this godlike work and to call, as life, the being of God? Only they who force the words of the saint can uphold such a thing, by gossiping him as ones who are mindless.

142. Not only the One Begotten Son of God, but also the Holy Ghost is called by saints as work and as power, but as One Who unchanged has these powers and works as the Father has them. This is for, God is called, according to the Great Dionysius, also as power, as One Who has had the power in Himself, from before, and Who surpasses the whole power. That's why, when One of These Two is called as power or work, he meant that They are in hypostasis. Also, Saint Basil the Great in everything, he says so: "The Holy Ghost is sanctifier power in being, in existence, and in hypostasis". But, by telling in his *Treaty about the Holy Ghost* that not all the works are in hypostasis, he obviously differentiated these ones from creatures too. This is because, the ones which are from the Holy Ghost as hypostatical, those are creatures. This is for, God created beings with features⁸⁶⁵.

143. The negative theology doesn't oppose itself to the affirmative theology, neither it abolished the affirmative theology, but it shows the fact that the things said affirmatively about God are true and are piously said. But God doesn't have these ones as we do. For instance, God has the knowledge of

⁸⁶⁵ The work of God isn't hypostasis, but it is into hypostasis; it is not being, but it is into being; it is not subsistent by itself, but it is subsistent into being, or into hypostasis (ενούσιος, ενυπόστατος, ανύπαρκτος). But Basil the Great, by showing that not all the movements are into hypostasis, he showed that some of them are created. Or they are, by themselves, as creatures.

the ones who exist (of the creatures). We too have the knowledge of some of the creatures. But we have that knowledge as about existing and made creatures. But God knows them not as existing and made, for He knew them, and not less, also before they were made. Therefore, he who says about God that God doesn't know the existing realities as existing, he doesn't oppose him who says that God knows the existing realities and He knows them for they exist. There is too, in the affirmative theology, a meaning that is characteristic to the negative theology. For instance, when somebody says that the whole knowledge is directed towards a certain object, or towards a content to be known, but the knowledge of God is directed towards no object, he doesn't negate the first affirmation, for God doesn't know the existing things (the creatures) as existing, and God doesn't have the knowledge of the existing realities (of the creatures) as we have it. Thus, one can say about God also that God doesn't exist, but in senses of exceeding. And he who says that, he says it in order him to show that they who say that God is, they say that wrongly, it unveils himself as not using the negative theology in senses of exceeding, but in sense of absence, namely in the sense that God doesn't exist at all. Of this abundance of disbelief suffer also them who attempt, woe to them, through the negative theology, to show that God doesn't have being and uncreated work⁸⁶⁶. But we receive both of them, with love, as ones which do not abolish one another, strengthening each of them through another, in the rightly-believer meaning.

⁸⁶⁶ In the negative theology there is an affirmative meaning. For instance, when one says that God doesn't know the existing realities, that's is an affirmation. This is for, God know those, above what they are, He knows them in their origin and in their depth into Himself. But, also in the affirmative theology there is a negative meaning, or a meaning characteristic to the negative theology. This is for, when we say that God know the realities from within Himself, we say that He doesn't know them as existing realities, as we know them. Thus, His affirmative knowledge, by exceeding our knowledge, it has a meaning characteristic to the negative theology. Thus, one can say both that God doesn't exist and that God does exist, but in sense of exceeding the existence, as it is not proper to us. But he who uses the expression belonging to some fathers that God doesn't exist, in order to simply denying the existing of God, or as an argument against them who say that God exist, he exposes himself as not using the expression "God doesn't exist" in senses of exceeding. Of this disbelief are proven as suffering those too, who use the negation either of the being or of the work of God, or of both of them, not in sense of exceeding, but in order they to deny that God has being and uncreated work.

144. In order to topple over all the elucubrations of our opposants, and in order us to prove the width of their insanity, I reckon that is enough a short word form the fathers: “He is without beginning, he says, and He is beginning”, or: “There is a God together with the beginning and the beginning is not removed by the fact that He is the beginning of the non-beginning”⁸⁶⁷. This is for, it is not nature of This One the beginning, as neither to That One the non-beginning. This is for, these ones are around the nature, and they aren’t the nature itself. So, what’s next? Because the beginning and the non-beginning aren’t the nature itself, but they are around the nature, will somebody say that these ones are cut off? One would say that only if he has gone man. And if these ones are uncreated, by being features of the nature of God, does that mean that God is composed? By no means. But if the natural features of God had been His nature, then, together with other fathers, also the Great Cyril would have taught us that the Godhead is composed. But, you read the writings of Great Basil and those belonging to his brother who cogitated alike him,

⁸⁶⁷ These affirmation ca be referred to the Father. The Father is without-beginning and He is beginning (of the Son). Or: the Father doesn’t lose His feature as beginning by the fact that He has together with His feature as beginning also that feature as non-beginning. But all of these can refer to the Son too, or the Father and the Son together. The Father is beginning of the non-beginning, but, from another point of view, the Father wis without beginning. And the Son has the Father as His beginning but, despite all these, He is eternal, so that He is without beginning. Or, the Son is One God together with the beginning. But the words beginning and non-beginning are used with different meaning relatedly to the Son than to the Father. These features express relations between the Father and the Son, but these features do not express Their common nature. This is because, if that was the case, they won’t be applied differently to the Father and to the Son. Neither to the Father is His nature the fact of being a beginning to His Son, nor to the So is His nature the fact of being a beginning (into the Father). Their nature is something else than these ones which are hypostatical features. The term “non-beginning” used for the Son, it will express a feature of His being, but when used for the Father, it won’t express only a feature of His being, and that’s why neither the Son is without-beginning only in that sense related to the Father. This is because, if that had been the case, the Father wouldn’t have been different from the Son, So, even when we use the term “non-beginning” of One or for Another of Them, we still express some different nuances. That’s why, neither that term expresses the being, but it expresses a feature of the being, which subsists in two or, respectively, in three different Hypostases. But, in the creator and the providential relation with the world, the Father and the Son are only One God and Lord, only one beginning to the world, but without-beginning in Himself, a beginning in time and not outside the time, as the Father is of the Son, but in Himself without-beginning, through feature of their common being. But neither in this relation of Theirs with the world, there are not erased their features as Persons, or the reciprocal relation between the Father and the Son, without being confounded the two kinds of relation to one another. This shows again the fact that the relations and the features are multiple, and therefore they aren’t one with the being.

against Eunomius. This is for, by reading those writings, you will find out what they of one thought with Eunomius are like, our opposants, and there you will clearly see the proves against them.

145. The Eunomians reckon that the being of the Father and of the Son, it is not the same. This is because, by reckoning that everything one says about God he says that about God's being, they argue that, because between giving birth and being nor there is a difference, Their beings would be different too. And the opposants from nowadays, they argue that is not the Same God Who had both godlike being and godlike work. This is because, by reckoning that everything one says about God is about God's being, and by denying any difference between the godlike being and the godlike work, by that they reckon that there are many and diverse gods. But we have demonstrated to all of those, that not everything that one says about God it will be about God's being too, but is could be also about God's report with something else, namely with something that isn't about Himself. This is for the Son is not Father. And the Son is Lord relatedly to the serving creation. This is for God masters upon the realities from time and from ever and upon the ages themselves. And to master is an uncreated work of God, that differs from God's being, as one names in relation with something else, and that is not Himself⁸⁶⁸.

146. The Eunomians say that everything one says about God is about God's being, intending to dogmatize that the fact of the non-birth is said about the being, and so, in their opinion, to lower the embodied Son – Who differs from the Father – on the level as creature. And they say that the reason for such a deed it is that not to be two gods, the first one unborn, while the second one born. By following to those ones, also the opposants from nowadays, they say that everything one

⁸⁶⁸ Here too, as in other places as well, Saint Gregory Palamas sees the works of God as His relations with something else (πρός τι ὅπερ αὐτός οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀναφορικῶς λεγόμενον). Makign abstraction of the things representing the inter-hypostatical relations of God with the world, His works are, therefore, His relations with the created world. Here could be the point where one could start from, towards a reconciliation between the Catholic theology and the Eastern theology, regarding the matter that one can speak at God not only about God's being, but also about God's works, in the sense expressed by Palamas. This is for, the Catholic theology too, it says that the features of God are God's reports with the created world. It only could take that the Catholic theology not to reckon these features as projected only by the world upon a passive being of God, but to see also God as having an active role in His relation with the world. Uncreated would be, then, the part given by God in these various relations.

says about God is about God's being, so that they lower, unfaithfully, the unseparated work on the level as creature, but differing from God's being, as one which is out of that one, but that is given to the creature towards impartation. (This is for all realities are imparted with the Providence that springs out of all-causing-godhead). And the reason for this deed, they say that is not to be there two godheads: the threefold hypostatical being, above name, above cause, and above impartation, and the work of God coming out of that one and that allows itself to be imparted and called. These ones cannot see that, as God and the Father is called as Father in report with His Son and He has the feature of being Father, in an uncreated manner, even if Father doesn't mean the being, so has God, in an uncreated manner, the work too, though the work differs from being. When we say only One Godhead, we say everything that God is, namely both His being and His work. Consequently, they are them who cut off, faithlessly, the One Godhead of God, in created and uncreated.

147. Accident is what occurs and disappears. Thus, we see also unseparated accidents. Accident is also what belong to somebody in a natural manner, for it grows up and it decreases. For instance, the knowledge into the rational soul. But within God, there is nothing of that kind, for God remains totally unchanged, so that nothing is reckon within Him as an accident. Despite all these, not everything that is said about God is said about God's being. This is because of saying also things in report with something else. These ones who the report with something else, but not the being. Similar is at God the godlike work too. So, the godlike work neither is the being, not it is accident, though it is called as accident by the theologians who shown only the fact that the work is into God, but it is not God's being.

148. We must also say that the godlike work, though being an accident, as they say, it is contemplated into God and it doesn't give birth to composition. This is taught to us also by Gregory called the Theologian, for he wrote about the Holy Ghost: "The Holy Ghost is either out of the self-standing realities, or out the realities contemplated in something else. Amongst these ones, the first ones are called as being by them who are knowers in these, and the second ones are called as accident. If there is accident, it will be the work of God. This is for, what else could be? Or Whose? This is for This One doesn't

receive composition. So, he says openly that, if that is from among the ones contemplated into God and that's why isn't related to the being, but it is an accident, and He is called as Ghost, it couldn't be else but the work of God. This is for, he showed that by saying: "This is for, what else could that be, or shoe?". Preparing the readers in advance, in order they to understand that that isn't anything else, neither quality, nor quantity, neither something else from among those which can be contemplated into God, but they can only be contemplated into work, he adds: "This is for, This One doesn't receive composition". But what doesn't receive composition like, that work contemplated into God? This is for, only God alone has His work as consummately non-passive, by only working, but not by experiencing in it, neither becoming, nor changing Himself⁸⁶⁹.

149. A little earlier, the Theologian presented this work also as uncreated. By not differentiating it and by not opposing it to the creature. For he says: "Amongst the wisemen from our time, some of them reckon the Ghost as creature, other as work, and other as God". He is calling here the hypostasis himself as God. And then he presents the work as opposed to the creature, he limpidly shown that the work isn't creature. And a little further on, he said about this work that that is the motion of God. How could not be the work of God, therefore, as uncreated? This is for, about that writes also Damascene, the bearer-of-God, in his chapter no. 59: "The work is, he says, the accomplisher and existential motion of the nature. The spring of the work is the nature, it is the nature where the work is. The accomplished thing is the work. And He Who works, is Him Who uses the work, of the hypostasis"⁸⁷⁰.

150. The Theologian is saying here: "If there is work, it will be worked and it won't work, and immediately that has

⁸⁶⁹ The work of God isn't an accident in a proper sense, because of not having anything passive in it, namely the Ghost isn't forced at all, from outside, to do that work, as such neither the Ghost is forced in His work, nor is Himself composed with that element from outside. Consequently, by not bringing any foreign element into God, the Ghost's work doesn't bring composition into God, so that Ghost's work isn't an accident as such.

⁸⁷⁰ Saint John Damascene discerns between the spring of the source (ἐνεργητικό) and the work (ἐνεργεια). The worker sets in motion the spring of the work (or the being). This Saint shows his preoccupation with clarifying the report between the efficient background and the subject setting that background in motion. So, where the works is, there the worker subject is too, but there will be also the efficient background, or the spring of that work.

been worked (finished), he will stop it”⁸⁷¹. The opposants understood and argued from here that the godlike work is created. This is because, they didn’t know that also about the uncreated ones one can say that they are worked, as the Theologian shows somewhere else, by writing that: “If the Father is a name of a work, the worker of that work will be the One-Beingness”. And Damascene, the bearer-of-God, he says: “Christ sat on the right hand of the Father, while working, in a godlike manner, the taking-care of everyone”. But neither the fact of “being stopped” doesn’t oppose the fact that the work to be uncreated. This is for, the creator work of God starts and comes to an end, as Moses says too, that “God rested of all His things which He started doing”. But the creator work that God starts and ceases, it is a natural and uncreated work of God.

151. The godlike Damascene, after he said that the work is an accomplishing and existential motion of the nature, by wanting to show that about such a work spoke the Theologian, that that is works and stopped, he added: “It was necessary to be known that the work is a motion, and that the motion is more worked than it works, as Gregory the Theologian says in his *Word about the Holy Ghost*: “And if it is work, it will be obvious that it will be worked and that it won’t work, and immediately after it will have been done, He will stop it”. It is obvious, therefore, that they who cogitate the opposite things, by dogmatizing that the work which Gregory has been speaking here about, it is created, they insanely lower it on the creature’s level, itself the natural and existential work of God, which, Saint Damascene, by showing it not only as worked by also as working, he showed it as uncreated. And the fact that, this affirmation doesn’t differ from that belonging to him who bears the name Theologian, I showed that, in details, in my *Words*⁸⁷².

152. The hypostatical features are indicate into God as being in a report with one another, for the hypostases differ

⁸⁷¹ So, through his word, Saint Gregory the Theologian shows that the work doesn’t work by itself, but it has a subject. In the works of God within us, there is active God Himself as Person.

⁸⁷² The fact that the godlike work has as worker the hypostasis Himself, it doesn’t mean that the work is passive. In the worked work it is shown Himself the Worker Subject. If the work had been passive, it would have been separated from its Subject. In reality, there cannot be operated a separation between the worker Subject and His work. And, just because of that, by declaring the work of the godlike subject as created, it will mean affirming by the godlike Subject as being created as well.

from One Another, but not according to Their Being. But sometimes God is called as being in report with the creation. This is because, one cannot call the All-Holy Trinity as Father too, as God is called as before ages, without beginning, great, and kind. This is because, not Each One among Hypostases, but only One is the Father out of Whom are and to Whom are related the Other Two. But in report with the creation, for the creation is a thing of All the Three Ones, a thing brought to existence out of nothing, and also for them who are made sons through the grace that is given, as a gift, in common by The Three Ones, the Trinity is called as Father too. For instance: “Your Lord God is One Lord” (Deut. 6: 4), or: “Our Father from heavens”, these expressions show the Holy Trinity as One Lord and as One God or ours, and as Our Father Who gives us birth through His grace. But in report with the of-One-Being Son, only the Father is called as Father. And He is also called as beginning, in report with the Son and with the Ghost. But the Father is also called, in report with the begun creation, but as Master and as Creator of all realities. So, when the Father is called as beginning in report with the Creation, then beginning is also the Son; but there aren’t two beginnings (principles), but there is only one beginning. So, in sense as relation, the Son is also called as beginning (principle) in report with the creation, as he is also called as Master in report with the serving realities. Consequently, the Father and the Son with the Ghost, They are relatedly to Creation, as only One beginning (principle) and as only One Master, only One Creator, only One God and Father, only One Ruler, Supervisor, and all the others. This is because, that won’t be say in report with something else, if that is His being⁸⁷³.

⁸⁷³ It seems that Saint Gregory Palamas reckoned that it belongs to Himself the Being of God to be towards something, but towards something God’s Being’s interpersonal interior. This is because, otherwise he wouldn’t have been existed as Father and as Son and as the Holy Ghost. And on this structure of the Being of God, as being towards something in Himself the being of God, it is founded the fact that of being able to be also towards something that is outside the being of God (but this external something, it becomes, by the fact that God enters the relation with that something, to some extent, as interior to God), it is founded the fact of being able to create, namely of creating and of accomplishing a creature, by manifesting also the other form of His capacity to be “towards something”. Otherwise, God would have remained locked up in some sort of pantheistic existence. So, the reality of the creature is the proving sign of the fact that God is Person, and without God being given that character by the creature itself. The fact of creating, it means that God is Person. The creature has its foundation in the Trinitarian character of God. That’s why Saint Gregory Palamas says that, if

153. Positions, skills, places, and times, and everything similar to those, they are not said relatedly to God in a proper sense, but in a borrow sense (metaphorical). But to make and to work, it can be said, in the most real sense, only about God⁸⁷⁴. This is for, only God does them. And He doesn't become and He doesn't suffer relatedly to His Being. And He alone does each thing through all the other things. He alone created out of inexistence realities, by having His almighty work, which He is even called through, in report with the world, and He has the works in His power. But, if He wants, there could be added something to the creatures. Having the suffering and the need for receiving something, that is related to helplessness. But having the power of doing and of adding something to the creatures, when wanting, is characteristic to the godlike and all-keeping strength⁸⁷⁵.

154. All the existing realities (the creatures) are recapitulated in ten categories: being, quality, quantity, towards what (relation), where (place), when (time) to make, to suffer, to have, and to lie (to stay). The last nine are contemplated into being (substance). Being so, God is being above-being, and only in Him is contemplated only the fact of existing and of making,

God hadn't been in Three Hypostases, God wouldn't have been either Creator or Master of all realities. By elevating up to the Being of God, His category as: "being towards something" (προς τι), Saint Gregory Palamas sees in the fact that right inside the divine being there is this "towards something", a supreme reason for the fact that nobody and nothing is for himself/itself, but for others. The divine being is nothing else from outside, except for the fact that He is Tri-Personal, that there is, forever, Another within Him. Due to this fact, also the creatures are one into another, but also for Somebody is above-creatures, namely due to Him Who, by creating them He accomplished them "towards something" of His, and He imprinted them too, through that, a "towards something" with Him. While God, by accomplishing His "towards something" only with the creatures, He accomplished that one in both possible ways, the creatures, by only accomplishing the "towards something" of theirs, also with that that is outside their circle, the creatures accomplish a perfect mode of theirs "towards something", and thus they really overcome the prison of their circle.

What Saint Gregory Palamas has said here, it is the ultimate foundation of the relation among persons and between persons and any other reality right in the divine being.

⁸⁷⁴ We must all the more recognize His work, to God, for only Him works by excellence while having nothing passive within Himself. God is actus purus. But this doesn't mean the absence of a subject or of some subjects who work, and of a fund which the work spring out from, into which there is given the capacity of the voluntary work. This is because, if there hadn't been a willing work, then it would have been a passive work, despite appearing as efficient.

⁸⁷⁵ Properly said, to Him is reduced the whole work in creation. He makes each thing through all things. If the creatures can work, the creatures have that too, from God. If God had behaved as the One Who passively looks at any work, that would have been a sign of some helplessness within Him. If that had been the case, God wouldn't have been almighty.

which do not bring to God's being any composition of change. This is for, God does all things while not suffering anything according to His being. This is for, God is Creator towards the Creation and beginning (principle) and Master of the creation who he has given a beginning and which serves Him. And God is our Father too, by giving us birth anew, by grace. But He is also the Father towards the Son Who didn't start, at all, in time; and He is Son towards the Father; and the Ghost is the proceeded of the Father, together-eternal with the Father and with the Son, by being All Thre of Them of-the-same-being. And they who say that God is only being that has nothing to be contemplated within it, they deem God as not having either the power of creating and of working, nor the relation towards something. If, therefore, He Who they reckon as God, He doesn't have these ones, then that God won't be either work, or Maker, and he won't either have a work. And He won't either be beginning (origin), nor Creator and Master; neither He is our Father by grace. This is because, how could Him be all of these, once they are not contemplated into His Being and since He has not the power of making and of relating Himself to something? And even the Three Hypostases would have been abolished, if it hadn't been contemplated into the Being of the Holy Trinity the relation towards something. And if He hadn't been in Three Hypostases, He neither would have been Master or all, nor God⁸⁷⁶. So, they who cogitate like this, alike the opposants, they too are without God.

155. God has also that what is not a being. But because He is not a being, it won't mean that He is an accident. This is because, that what not only that doesn't disappear, but that what not even receives or suffers some growth or decrease, that cannot be counted among accidents. But if this isn't neither accident nor being, it won't mean that he is among those which do not exist at all, but he exists and even really. He is not an accident for He is totally unchangeable. But He is neither being,

⁸⁷⁶ Even God's real works shows God as existing in Hypostases, namely existing in a real manner, by the fact that He is towards something in His interior and towards something created. This is because, if God's Being hadn't had these ones, then His Being wouldn't have been towards something, His Being wouldn't have been working, so that God wouldn't have been a Subject (respectively, in Three) Who works and Who manifests Himself. Such a Being would have been non-hypostatical, namely unreal, or simply cogitated. Through works, namely by the fact that God is Person or Persons, God exists and we live God as something real.

because he is not among those who subsist by themselves. That's why He is called by some theologians as accident, only intending to show that he isn't being. So, what's next? If each among the hypostatical features and each among hypostases hadn't been either being or accident at God, would have been God inexistent? God forbid that! Likewise, the godlike work of God, isn't either being or accident, but it isn't inexistent because of that. And, I to say what all theologians reckon: If God does something by the fact that He wants that, but not only by the fact that He has a certain nature, it will differ to want from having a certain nature – and a godlike nature. So, what will we say? For the will at God is like so, the godlike will is something else than the nature of God and it is not being, and will there not be being, and will it not exit at all? By no means! But it is, and it is of God Who has not only a being, but He has will as well, according to which he makes, either somebody wants to call that as accident, as one that is not either being or accident, and as one that doesn't suffer composition or change. So, God has both what is being and what isn't being, even if one would call that accident, namely God has godlike work and will.

156. The being, if it hadn't had a work that differs from the being, the being would have been totally inconsistent and only as a contrivance of the cogitation. This is because, the man said *sui generis*, he doesn't cogitate, he doesn't believe, he doesn't see, he doesn't smell, he doesn't speak, he doesn't hear, he doesn't move, he doesn't breathe, he doesn't eat and, simply speaking, he doesn't have the work that is different from being and that isn't shown as in hypostasis. That's why, the *man sui generis* is totally inconsistent (inexistent). But the man who has a natural work that differ from his being, one or more works, or all the works we mentioned before, one can know out of those that the man is in hypostasis and not inconsistent. And for these works can be seen at more than one man, but at two, at three, or at many people, it will prove that the man is in countless hypostases.

157. According to our right-faith, namely the right-faith of the Church founded by the grace of God, God has a natural work which shows Himself and, by that, that work differs from His Being. This is for, He fore-knows and He takes care of the realities from below, He creates them, He upholds them, He masters them, and He transforms all of them according to His

will, and that's a known fact. By this, it is shown that He is in Hypostasis, but not only non-hypostatical Being. And for all these works aren't contemplated in only one Hypostasis, but in Three Hypostases, God is known through these works as existing in Three Hypostases. The opposants, though, by saying that God hasn't a natural work showing Him, and by that being that work different from His Being, they actually say that God isn't in Hypostasis and so they deem the Lord Who is in Three Hypostases, as totally non-hypostatical (inconsistent). Thus, they overwhelm insomuch, into straying, on Sabellius the Libyan, as much as the disbelief surpasses in evilness, the right-faith⁸⁷⁷.

158. The Three Godlike Hypostases, not only They have a resembling work, as it is in our case, but truly one according to the number too. This cannot be said by them who cogitate the opposite things. This is because, they say that the Three Hypostases do not have a common uncreated work, but they say that the Hypostases are consecutive works of One among Hypostases, so that, according to them, there is no common godlike work. So, neither they can thus, to say that the Three Hypostases have only one work, but, by abolishing, on at a time, other and other Hypostasis, one can see that they make as non-hypostatical, on God Who actually is in Three Hypostases⁸⁷⁸.

159. They who have their souls ill because of this deceiving opinion, by calling as created that works that differs from the Being of God, they also reckon that the creator work of God, namely His creator power, it would be created. But no one can work and create without a work, as one cannot either exist

⁸⁷⁷ If the work hadn't been different from Being, if the Being hadn't had a work differing from the Being, then the Being wouldn't have been either in Hypostases Who to give, through works, the sign of the real existence of the Being. Such a Being wouldn't have either existed in a real mode.

⁸⁷⁸ If the Three Hypostases hadn't had a common work, but the Hypostases had been successive works of only One Hypostasis, by that the godlike Hypostases would have been abolished by and large, because of no longer being known a relation within the doghead (a "towards something"), and without that nothing can be proven as existing. If that had been the case, God would have become something inconsistent, or only thought, namely contrived. Each Hypostases must have a work, in order to manifest the real existence of the Being through work. But at God, this work must be common, for the Being is common too. Otherwise, the Hypostases would have been separated and the unity of Being, of God, it would have been abolished, or the Trinity of the Hypostases would have been abolished, so that the godlike Being would have remained as a simple abstraction.

without existence. So, as him who says that the existence of God is created, he cannot truly say that God exists in an uncreated manner, likewise he who calls the work of God as created, he cannot reckon that God can work and build in an uncreated manner.

160. Are and are called as creatures of God, by them who cogitate rightly-believing, not the work of God according to the nonsenses uttered by the opposants (woe, what faithlessness!), but the results of the godlike work. This is because, if the creatures had been the work, then the creatures would have been uncreated (oh, what insanity!), as ones existing from before being created, or if God hadn't had work before creatures (oh, what a stray belief!). But God being worker and almighty from ever, the creatures, whatever they would be called like, they are not the work of God, but they are the made things, or the results of the work. And the work of God is, according to some theologians, uncreated and together-eternal with God.

161. Not the work is known according to the Being, but the Being is known out of work. But it is a known fact that the Being is, but we do not know what the Being is. That's why we know about God that He exists not out of His Being, but out of His Providence. So, the work differs from Being and by that, namely by the fact that the work is the one making known, while the Being is what is known - as existing - through the work. But the defenders of the straying, by striving themselves to convince us that the godlike work doesn't differ at all from the godlike Being, they strive themselves, by abolishing that which God is known through, to persuade us that we do not know the fact that God exists, as they do not know it either. And he who doesn't know this, he will be the most-without-God and the most-without-mind.

162. When these ones say that God has work, but the work doesn't differ at all from the godlike being, they try to overshadow their straying and they try to bewilder and to alure their listeners, in a deceiving manner (sophistically). This is because, Sabellius the Libyan did the same, by saying that God-and-the-Father has Son too, but the Son doesn't differ at all from the Father. As, therefore, Sabellius was proven as affirming that the Father doesn't have a Son, because of denying the different according to hypostases between Them, likewise these ones, by saying that the godlike work doesn't differ at all from the godlike Being, they are proven now

cogitating God as not having at all, a work. God doesn't have either "to make" or "to work". This is because, according to some theologians, somebody cannot work without a work, as, also according to those theologians, somebody cannot exist without existence. And the fact that the godlike work is different, in the opinion of them who think healthily, from the godlike Being, it is proven by that too. The work commits through work something that isn't the worker. This is for, God works and makes the creatures. But God is uncreated. And to relate to something, it always means to relate to something else. This is for, the Son is say in report with the Father. But the Father is never Son of the Father. So, like the relating to something cannot be but different from the Being, or it cannot be contemplated except into Being, but to be Being, likewise it is impossible the work not to differ from the Being, but to be Being, even though this is not pleasant to the opposants.

163. Basil the Great, when speaking in his syllogistic chapters, about God, he says that the work isn't either him who works, neither what he worked (made). So, the work isn't non-different from the Being. And the godlike Cyril at his turn, when speaking about God, he says that "to do" belongs to the work, and "to give birth" belongs to the nature. And the nature and the works aren't the same thing. At his turn, the bearer-of-God Damascene, he says that the birth is a thing belonging to the godlike nature, and the creation it is a thing belonging to the godlike will. In another place he also says, clearly: "Something else is the work and something else is the spring of the work; the work is the existential motion of the nature, while the spring of the work it is the nature which the work came out of". So, in many places, the godlike fathers say that the work is different from the godlike Being.

164. The godlike Being it totally without-name, because it is above-cogitation. But the godlike Being is called out of all His works, none of the names being different - when it is about the godlike Being - according to their meaning, from another name. This is for, through each of them and through all of them, it is not names anything else but that Hidden, and we do not know at all what that is. But referring to the works, each of these names has a different meaning. This is for, who doesn't know that to created, and to master, and to judge, and to take care of, and to be us adopted by God by His grace, all of these differ from one another? So, they who say that these godlike natural

things are created, because of being different from one another and form the godlike Being, what do they else but lowering God on the level of the creature? This is because, the created realities, the mastered realities, the judged realities and, simply, all the ones like these, they are the creatures, and not the Creator, the Master, and the Judge, neither the creatures are the power of judging, and of mastering, and of creating, which are contemplated into God, in a natural manner.

165. The Being of God as it is, according to the bearers-of-God, totally without a name, for it is above-name, likewise is also impossible to be imparted, because it is, according to those, as above-impartation. But the opposants do not listen to the teaching of the Ghost, given through our fathers, as a gift, but they prefer to slander us, for we confess together with the fathers, and the gossipers say that, if the godlike work differs from the godlike Being, and if there is everywhere contemplated something in the Being of God, then will be produced many gods, or The One God will become composed. They do not know that not the power “of working” and the work, but the feature of “suffering” and the suffering cause the decomposition. But God work while not suffering at all, and He neither changes Himself. Therefore, God isn’t composed because of His work. In addition to that, God also has reference towards something else and towards creation, as The One Who is the Beginning (the Principle) and the Master of the creation. But, because of that, He is not counted together with the created realities. To say that there are several gods because God has work, even if the godlike Being and the godlike work belong to a unique God, or, better said, they belong to The Same God, it is truly a delusion of their insanity.

166. After our Lord said to His disciples: “There are some of those who stand here, who won’t taste the death until their will see the Kingdom of God coming into power” (Mk. 9: 1), six days later, He took Peter and James and John, and they climbed the Mount Tabor, and He “shined to them like the sun and His vestments became white like the light” (Mt. 17: 1-2). This was because, they no longer were able to look at Him; better said, by not being they able to look at that light, they fell to the ground, on their faces (Mt. 17: 6). Still, according to the promise of our Savior, they saw the Kingdom of God, that godlike and mysterious light, called by Gregory and by Basile the Great, as godhead. The first one says: “The godhead shown,

on the mountain, to the disciples, it is light and beauty of Him Who truly is powerful, and His intelligible and contemplated godhead”⁸⁷⁹. Basile the Great says: “That light is also beauty of God, a light contemplated only by saints into the power of the godlike Ghost”⁸⁸⁰. That’s why he says again: “Peter and the sons of the thunder saw His beauty on the mountain, as overwhelming the shininess of the sun and they have been found worthy of seeing with their eyes the earnest of His presence”⁸⁸¹. And Damascene, the speaker-about-God, together with John with a Golden Mouth, they called that light: the natural ray of the godhead. The first one writes: “Son born without beginning out of the Father, He has the without-beginning-natural-ray of the godhead, and the glory of the godhead become the glory of the body”⁸⁸². And the Golden Speaker says: “The Lord showed Himself on the mountain shinier than Himself, the godhead showing His rays”.

167. This godlike and mysterious light, the godhead and the Kingdom of God, the beauty and the shininess of the godlike nature, the vision and the joy of the saints into the endless age, the natural rays and glory of the godhead, all of these are called by the much-speaking heretics, as hallucination and creature, and they also call them who cannot endure to blaspheme this godlike light like they do, and who reckon that God is uncreated both according to His Being and according to His work, the heretics slander them as believing in two gods. But let the heretics be ashamed! This is for, despite being uncreated the godlike light too, One is our God in only one godhead. This is for, as it has been shown above, in details, also the uncreated being and the uncreated light, namely the godlike grace and its light, they belong to One God.

168. The stray heretics, therefor, by saying daringly at Synod that they reckon that as fantom and as creature, and by attempting to turn off the godlike light that shined out of our Savior on Tabor, and because they have been widely rejected, but they haven’t accepted that, they have been submitted to a written anathema⁸⁸³. This is because they blaspheme the God’s

⁸⁷⁹ Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, *Homily no. 40*, 6; G.P. XXXVI: 365 A. *Homily no. 39 at the Holy Baptism*, G.P. XXXVI: 364 B.

⁸⁸⁰ *Homily at the Psalm 44*: V; G.P. XXIX: 400 CD.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸² Saint John Damascene, *Word at Transfiguration*, G.P. XCVI: 564 B.

⁸⁸³ It is about the Synod from the year 1341.

coming into body⁸⁸⁴, and they insanely argue that the godhead of God is created, and so they say that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are creature. This is for the godhead of the Three One is one and the same. And if they say that they honor the uncreated godhead, it will be obvious that they argue the two godheads of God, one created and another uncreated. Thus, they aspire to surpass all the stray and ill-faithed ones, form yore.

169. On another occasion, by attempting to cover up their straying, they say that that light that shined on Tabor, it would be both uncreated and Being of God, and thus they blaspheme in many concerns. This is for, that light was seen by apostles, they wrongly cogitate in a stray manner, that one can see the Being of God. But let them hear him who says: "No one truly live, who saw or who described in words, the Being of the nature of God" (Jer. 23: 18). And not only among people but among angels too. Even the seraphs with six wings, they cover their faces with their wings before that light that comes out of there (Isa. 6: 2). So, once the supra-Being of God hasn't ever been seen by anybody and ever, when the heretics say that that light is just that supra-Being, they confess that that light is also totally unseen and that neither the chieftains of the apostles were worthy of seeing it on the mountain, nor the Lord truly promised it them, neither tells the truth he who says: "I saw that light" (Jn. 1" 14). This is because, by being with Him in the mountain and taking vigil, "Peter and they who were together with him, they saw His glory". And another says about John, the disciple especially beloved to Christ, that "he saw, on the mountain, itself the unveiled godhead of the Word". So, they saw, they truly saw that uncreated and godlike light, God remaining unseen, according to His above-being hiding, even if the chieftains of the heresy and they who are of-one-thought with them will die.

170. But when somebody asks these heretics, who say that that light is the Being of the godhead: "Could one see, the Being of God?", being forced, the heretics uncover their cunningness, by saying that that light is creature, for through it

⁸⁸⁴ Saint Gregory Palamas remarked on several occasions, that by denying the uncreated work of God into creatures, it implies in itself the denial of the embodiment. The Body of Christ would have remains, if that had been the case, beside His godhead, but not penetrated by his godhead.

the Being of God was seen. This is because “the Being of God can be seen through creatures”. Thus, they the wicked ones, they again transform in creature the light of the Transfiguration of the Lord. Besides, one cannot see the Being of the Lord through creatures, but one can see the creator work of God. So, in a stray manner, and in a voice with Eunomius, these ones say too, that the Being of God can be seen through creatures. Thus, the nonsense of their faithlessness, it has many sorts. Therefore, we must run away from them and from partaking with them, as from a corruptible-of-soul and with-many-faces hydra, and as from a of-many-faces crookedness of the right-faith.

